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Henry, the Fourth.
King of France and Navarre.

From a Miniature in the possession of the Duke of Buccleugh.

THE REIGN OF HENRY IV.

KING OF FRANCE AND NAVARRE

FROM NUMEROUS UNPUBLISHED
MS. AND OTHER DOCUMENTS IN THE PUBLIC
AND PRIVATE LIBRARIES OF ROYAUME DE

PART I.

HENRY IV. AND THE LEAGUE.

By

MARTHA WALKER FREER,

AUTHOR OF

"THE LIFE OF MARGUERITE D'ANGOULÊME," "JEANNE D'ALBRET,"
"ELIZABETH DE VALOIS AND THE COURT OF PHILIP II."
"HENRY III, KING OF FRANCE," ETC.

"Il n'est rien d'impossible."—LEGENDE DE

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
LONGMAN AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,
SUCCESSORS TO HENRY COLBURN,
13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.
1857.

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HISTORY

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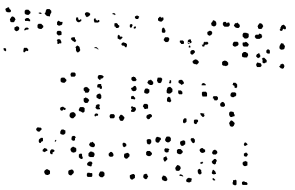
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HENRY IV,

KING OF FRANCE AND NAVARRE.

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On the morning of Tuesday, August 2nd, 1589, at four o'clock, Henry III., king of France, expired. The hôtel of Gondy, cardinal-bishop of Paris, at St. Cloud, was thronged with nobles and officers. The vast army encamped before Paris waited the event in suspense and apprehension. In the chamber of death, terror prevailed. The knife of the regicide, Jacques Clément, had partially satiated the animosity of madame de Montpensier; and saved the Holy League and its nominal chief, the duke de Mayenne, from destruction.[1]

The dukes d'Epernon and de Bellegarde stood at the head of the bed upon which lay the body of the king. M. d'Entragues held the jaw of the deceased; while at the foot of the couch, two monks of the Order of Minimes recited litanies. Behind the ecclesiastics, knelt the young count d'Auvergne,[2]—his face hidden by his hands, and sobbing aloud. Around, and in the adjacent chambers, the courtiers of the deceased king, beside themselves with consternation, bewailed the catastrophe, and muttered protestations that

[1] Henry III., His Court and Times, vol. iii. chap. iv. book 6, for the full relation of the assassination of Henry III.

[2] Son of Charles IX. and Marie Touchet.

no consideration should induce them to vow allegiance to a heretic prince.

In the middle of the apartment stood Henri Quatre, gazing sorrowfully on this scene of excitement.

No salutations of Vive le Roy! sustained the fortitude of Le Béarnnois at this critical moment. Entragues, d'O, Châteauvieux, and others — the minions of the late reign — audibly exclaimed, "That they prayed God might doom them to everlasting perdition if they recognised a heretic king!" "Hold your tongues! you chatter like women!" abruptly interposed the more prudent Epernon.

The king at length beckoned to the marshal de Biron, and terminated the scene by taking the arm of the latter, and retiring from the apartment.

The position of Henry IV. after his unexpected accession to the title of king of France, was so precarious, that the eventual recognition of his royal claims was deemed impossible. The invincible valour of Le Béarnnois, however, had rescued Henry III. from a condition of helpless isolation.[1] After the assassination of the Guises, and the revolt of Paris, when the sceptre of France was gliding from his grasp, Henry III. invoked the succour of the heretic king of Navarre. Loyally was the appeal answered. On

[1] See Henry III., his Court and Times, vol. iii. book 6.

the 1st day of April, 1589, the reconciliation of the monarchs was effected. The enthusiasm for the royal cause throughout the Protestant states of Europe, after the convention of Henry III. with the king of Navarre and his Huguenots, surpassed the most sanguine anticipations. Ten thousand Swiss troops from the Protestant cantons were enlisted by Sancy. Schomberg raised ten thousand reiters, and sixteen thousand lands-knechts in Germany. The king of Navarre brought five thousand infantry, five hundred arquebusiers, and five hundred cavaliers, the *élite* of his nobles. The duke de Longueville[1] gathered under the banner of the king two thousand men, commanded by valiant officers. By the advice of the king of Navarre, in concert with the marshal de Biron and the duke d'Epernon, excellent appointments were made for the government of the provinces of the realm. An attack on Tours by the duke de Mayenne was gallantly repulsed; and the two kings advanced and encamped before Paris at the head of an army exceeding thirty-eight thousand men, well equipped with artillery, and commanded by the most illustrious of the nobles of France. The rebel city

[1] Henri d'Orléans, duke de Longueville, count de Dunois, son of Léonor, duke de Longueville, and Marie de Bourbon, duchesse d'Etouteville. The duke de Longueville espoused, about the year 1592, Catherine de Gonzaga de Cleves, daughter of the duke de Nevers. He died, April, 1595, at Dourlens.

trembled: the lawless factions quailed before impending retribution. The hand of madame de Montpensier,[1] however, placed the poniard in the grasp of the regicide monk. Inflamed to madness by her blandishments and wiles, Jacques Clément went forth to avenge the murder of the Guises, and to deliver the turbulent demagogues of Paris from condign chastisement.

During the night of Monday, August 1st, the king of Navarre held secret conference with his adherents in his quarters at Meudon. The orthodox nobles also, perceiving that a few hours would terminate the life of the king, likewise held council at St. Cloud. The consternation was too great, however, to admit of serious deliberation. The event about to occur must dissolve that mighty confederation banded for the downfall of the League, and of the tyranny of the council of Seize.[2] The sceptre of St. Louis was falling

[1] Catherine de Lorraine Guise, daughter of Francois, duke de Guise, and of Anne d'Esté. She espoused Louis, duke de Montpensier, August 28, 1561, and died in Paris, May 6, 1597. Her dowry amounted to 300,000 livres.

[2] La Ligue des Seize was the seditious confederation organized in Paris, under the auspices of Guise and his allies, nominally to secure the accession of an orthodox king after the demise of Henry III. A council was formed of these demagogues, called le conseil des Seize, or the council of the "Seize Quartiers de la ville de Paris et fauxbourgs d'icelles." See the history of the rise of the League des Seize—Henry III., his Court and Times, vol. iii. p. 15.

into the grasp of a heretic prince, under the ban of Rome. Would the orthodox nobles acknowledge the dominion, and fight to insure the supremacy of an apostate monarch? The Swiss and German legions, in all amounting to thirty-six thousand men, had been levied in the name and for the service of Henry III. Was it probable that these mercenaries and their officers would remain in the nominal pay of a king, whose very right to the crown was disputed by the majority of the orthodox parliaments of the realm?

The marshal de Biron,[1] meantime, as soon as Henry III. had expired, saluted the Béarnnois as king of France and Navarre. Henry retired from the death-chamber of his predecessor, leaning on the arm of the marshal, whose military repute invested him with great authority. The first thought of Henri Quatre, was to obtain the important adherence of the Swiss and German legions. "M. de Biron," exclaimed he hastily; "now is the time to proclaim yourself the stay and preserver of my crown! we will not make speeches; let us act! Go, and receive the oaths of the Swiss, and then return and help me to prevail against your enemies, and my own!" Sancy,[2]

[1] Armand de Gontaut, sieur de Biron, maréchal de France, son of Jean, baron de Biron, and Anne de Bonneval.

[2] Nicholas de Harlay, baron de Sancy, one of the most valiant officers of the realm.

meanwhile, fired with great zeal for the cause of his royal master; and foreseeing the inevitable decease of the late king, had repaired after the council at Meudon, holden during the past night, to the camp of the Swiss, and by the force of his eloquence, and a timely pecuniary bribe to their officers, had bought the soldiers over to a man. Whilst the king was still conferring with the marshal de Biron, the door of the cabinet opened, and M. de Givry entered, to announce these welcome tidings. "Sire!" exclaimed Givry; "our gallant cavaliers say they will weep the decease of the late king when they have avenged him. Sire! all without wait anxiously for your commands. You are king of the brave! and poltroons alone will abandon your cause![1] Sancy, Beauvais-Nangis, Ségur, the minister Des Amours, and others, then entered the royal closet to congratulate the king. Four hours later, Henry arrayed in one of the violet velvet habits appertaining to the deceased king, received a deputation of forty officers from the Swiss levies. His majesty's content was visible in his countenance. He warmly thanked and embraced Sancy; and said to the Swiss officers, that he should remember, and would one day recompense their loyal zeal.[2]

[1] Aubigné, liv. ii. p. 185 et seq. edit. de 1616.

[2] Hist. de Jacques Auguste De Thou, liv. 97.—Cayet, Chronologie Novennaire.—Mém. du duc d'Angoulême.

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and partly effaced Henry's grateful recollection of the services formerly rendered him by the duke. The pleasure which Henry III. manifested in the society of the king of Navarre after their reconciliation, roused the jealousy of the arrogant favourite. Epernon, therefore, had audaciously taunted the king of Navarre, with the outrages and insolences committed by his Huguenots. "Monsieur! it is a fact, more true than pleasant, that you make war like a freebooter and a plunderer." Henry retorted, by asking the duke whether he thought to use him as he and his royal master had done the duke de Guise. This recrimination was arrested by Henry III.; but no subsequent explanation had reconciled the disputants. The nobles also liked a wealthy monarch. Henri Quatre was so poor that the very wardrobe and personal effects of his predecessor passed into his coffers—a grievance keenly felt by Epernon and Bellegarde, who were thus despoiled, as they said, of the lawful perquisites of the offices they had filled about the person of the late king. The courtiers, likewise, had been accustomed to incline reverently before the magnificent and stately mien of their deceased

sort, Catherine Marguerite de Foix Candale. The duke was the second son of Jean de Nogaret, baron de la Valette, and of Jeanne de Lary de Bellegarde, aunt of the duke de Bellegarde. He was created a duke, with precedence extraordinary, by Henry III., in 1581.

sovereign; to applaud the caustic irony, or fluent graces of his speech; and to wonder at the costly variety of his attire. The prince who now claimed their allegiance had little majesty of presence;[1] he was jocund, buoyant, and restless; he hated perfume and frippery; and had the inconvenient propensity of attending to his own affairs. Moreover, he had a manly heart; and what was most to be apprehended in their opinion, Henry had shown himself to be statesman and a warrior.

In great perplexity, therefore, the lords met at the abode of M. de Luxembourg. The alternative, it was felt, would be too ignominious, to surrender to M. de Mayenne and the turbulent demagogues installed at the Hôtel de Ville, and self-designated the Council of Forty. The formidable armies of the Spanish monarchy, should the nobles delay their recognition of the rightful claims of Le Béarnnois, might anticipate their election, and impose upon France, as her king, the future husband of the Infanta Doña Isabel, daughter of the eldest sister of Henry III.[2] No orthodox French prince of the blood-royal was eligible for the succession. The old cardinal de Bourbon, broken with gout and other

[1] Henry, on his accession, was in his 36th year; "Il était bien fait, d'une taille riche, les yeux vifs, le front grand, le nez long, l'air martial, et une longue barbe grise qu'il portait en éventail comme François I." Mathieu, Hist. de Henri IV.

[2] Elizabeth de Valois, consort of Philip II., king of Spain.

maladies, was a prisoner in the castle of Chinon.[1] The heir of Condé was an infant in arms. The cardinal de Vendôme was volatile, captious, and profligate. The count de Soissons—then the humble suitor for the hand of the king's sister, madame Catherine de Bourbon—professed towards Henry IV. intents most loyal. The prince de Conti[2] was so deaf that he heard little, and understood less, from his total want of the power of common observation. The duke de Montpensier, step-son to madame de Montpensier, the queen of the League, had several times been heard to declare, "That never, on the demise of Henry III., would he acknowledge other king than Le Béarnois; though he should earnestly pray for his majesty's speedy conversion." These weighty reasons considered, the duke de Longueville, M. de Rambouillet, and M. de Guitry proposed that Henri Quatre should be forthwith proclaimed in camp, as the only expedient to save France from anarchy under the League, or from dismemberment between the king of Spain, and the dukes de Savoye and Lorraine. This proposition was rejected with warmth by M.

[1] The Cardinal de Bourbon, titular king of the League, was the youngest son of Charles, duc de Vendôme, and of Francoise d'Alençon. His brother was Antoine, king of Navarre, father of Henry IV.

[2] The prince de Conti, the count de Soissons, and the cardinal de Vendôme were sons of Louis I., prince de Condé, slain at Jarnac.

d'O, by his brother. M. de Manou, the marshal de Dampierre, and by M. d'Entragues. They agreed that England was a notable example, that sooner or later a heretic sovereign infected his people with heresy; and, therefore, that it were better to endure years of anarchy, than to sever the realm of France from the true Catholic Church. The duke d'Epernon, the marshal de Biron, the duke de Piney, and other chief nobles, then proposed—"That Henri de Navarre should be proclaimed king of France, at this perilous juncture, on his majesty's acceptance of the following articles: 1. That within six months, he would cause himself to be instructed in the Holy Catholic Apostolic Faith. 2. That during this interval, he should bind himself to nominate no Huguenot to state offices. 3. That his majesty would permit the nobles to send an embassage to Rome, to explain to his Holiness the weighty reasons which had induced them to acknowledge his sovereignty."[1]

The fear of Spanish conquest; the adhesion to the cause of "le Navarrois" of the Swiss and German levies, in all twenty-five thousand men; and the well appreciated loyalty of the duke de Montpensier alone could have induced Epernon and others to accept this alternative;—or

[1] De Thou, liv. 97.—Cayet, Chron. nov. Péréfixe. Le Grain—Décade de Henri IV.

to touch the sceptre of an excommunicated monarch under any conditions. The opinion of the majority, therefore, being in favour of the immediate proclamation of the king, it was resolved that, the same evening, a deputation of two nobles should wait on his majesty to advertise him of their deliberation, and to ask audience on the morrow for the lords composing the privy council of the late king. The duke de Longueville and M. d'O were the personages selected for this mission. The duke was directed to declare to his majesty that, "very Christian being one of the attributes of the king of France, it was impossible he could assume the title without demonstrating its reality." Longueville, when he arrived at the king's abode, shrank from delivering this message; and finally declined to be its bearer. His colleague, M. d'O, therefore, took upon himself to administer the objurgation. This d'O[1] had rendered himself peculiarly obnoxious, during the late reign, by his assumptions and unbridled tongue. He had been especially favoured by Henry III., who conferred upon M. d'O the post of minister of finance, as his majesty, by his own avowal, derived equal amusement and benefit from the

[1] François d'O, Seigneur d'O de Mailebois, de Fresne, master of the wardrobe to the kings Henry III. and IV., chief secretary of finance, and governor of Paris.

audacity of his minister's pecuniary enterprises. Henry gave a gracious reception to the envoys. In reply to the admonition addressed to him by d'O, he said: "That he returned thanks with sincere heart to the nobles for their recognition of his undoubted rights; that he had been nurtured in the reformed religion, which he held to be the true faith; nevertheless, he was not a bigot, and would submit himself to the decision of a general council of the Gallican Church; and moreover, again seek instruction in the tenets of the Romish faith."[1] The duke de Longueville and M. d'O retired well satisfied with Henry's courteous deportment and promises; and proceeded to render an account of their mission to the lords, who waited their return at the lodging of the duke de Piney.[2]

The king, during the private conferences of his nobles, spent the afternoon in granting audiences to the officers of the late allied army. Nothing could exceed the dexterity of the king's manner. His affability won the common soldier, whom he propitiated by requesting support against the hostile confederation of the Catholic lords. With

[1] Mezerai—Grande Histoire—De Thou—Aubigné.

[2] François de Luxembourg, first duc de Piney, son of Antoine de Luxembourg, count de Brienne, and Charlotte de Savoye Villars. He espoused first, Diane de Lorraine-Aumale; secondly, Marguerite de Lorraine-Vaudemont, sister of Queen Louise de Lorraine.

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his Huguenot troopers, his majesty assumed a confidential bearing, which implied that present concession must be made to expediency. The orthodox gentleman, Henry flattered by his respectful allusions to the faith; and by the horror he expressed at the regicidal deed committed on the person of the late king.

On again retiring, Henry issued instructions that none should enter his cabinet, excepting those persons who enjoyed the privilege during the reign of Henry III. As king of Navarre, Henry enforced little court etiquette; he was the friend and captain of his hardy warriors—*leur bon compagnon*—as his majesty was wont to be designated. Henry's tact, however, now admonished him how great would be the shock to the loyal feelings of the magnificent Epernon, or of the punctilious Biron, to find himself jostled in the royal cabinet by some needy and facetious Huguenot. The same evening, Henry's resolution was put to the test. At the royal *coucher*, the usher refused the *entrée*, according to his instructions, to one Le Bonnière, to whom, in former times, Henry permitted great familiarity. Bonnière, in a fit of rage, seized the usher by the collar, and was proceeding to inflict castigation, when the uproar brought his majesty in person to the scene of conflict. Henry rebuked the violence of Le Bonnière, and dismissed him,

saying, "Learn, monsieur, in future, to discriminate; there is a notable difference between the dignity of a king of Navarre, and the majesty of the king of France!"[1] Murmurs of discontent thereupon became rife in the camp of Meudon. The Huguenot captains, who had long enjoyed privileges and precedency at the court of Nérac, beheld themselves eclipsed by the new courtiers of their king; while others affected to believe that, dazzled by his present altitude, Henri Quatre would ere long propitiate his subjects by conforming to the religion of the majority.

The following morning, Wednesday, August 3rd, a great assemblage of nobles gathered in the hôtel de Gondy. They first visited the chamber in which the remains of Henry III. lay in state; when each noble sprinkled the bier with holy water. They then conferred together, before proceeding to the hôtel de Tillet to pay homage to the sovereign whom necessity alone compelled them to acknowledge. The news that the duke de Montpensier[2] had that

[1] Mémoires très particulières du duc d'Angoulême, fils de Charles IX. Paris, 1662.

[2] François, third duke de Montpensier. He espoused Renée d'Anjou, and died in 1592. The duke was amongst the most faithful of the king's adherents, and bitterly censured the violent proceedings of his step-mother, the duchess-dowager de Montpensier, Catherine de Lorraine.

morning arrived in camp from Normandy, and had hastened to throw himself at the feet of Henri Quatre, hastened their deliberations. The king received the lords with dignity and reserve. He was attended by two princes of the blood, the prince de Conti and the duke de Montpensier. The duke de Longueville, the count d'Auvergne, and also many Huguenot chieftains surrounded the king. Henry accepted the articles presented for his ratification, rejecting only the clause which bound him not to nominate any Huguenot to a state office. His majesty, however, frankly promised, in lieu, to tolerate the Romish worship throughout those districts where such had been suppressed by his authority. The nobles then knelt, and offered to Henry their lives, their swords, and their estates to vindicate his lawful claim to the throne. A solemn act of recognition was next signed by all the great nobles present, excepting by the duke d'Epernon—who alleged as his reason, that his majesty having been pleased to permit his two commanders-in-chief, the marshals de Biron and d'Aumont, to sign the document next to the royal princes, it would for ever derogate from the rank granted to him by the late king if he, by sign manual, acknowledged such precedence.[1] The act was signed

[1] The patent of the duke d'Epernon gave him precedence over every peer of France, excepting the duke de Joyeuse, and

by the dukes de Montpensier, Longueville and Piney, the count d'Auvergne, the prince de Conti, the duke de Montbazon, M. d'O, Richelieu grand provost, the lords of Châteauvieux, d'Angennes, Manou, and Dinteville. Proclamation of the name, style, and titles of the new king was then made in camp, amidst the cheers of the soldiers, both Huguenot and orthodox.[1]

In Paris, meanwhile, the intelligence of the decease of Henry III. was received with frantic rejoicings. Flags waved; the people cheered, and greedily perpetrated fresh outrages on the royal adherents. The portrait of the regicide was borne side by side with the effigies of the "murdered princes of Guise;" while a statue of the deceased king was ignominiously dragged by the neck in the mire. Madame de Montpensier embraced the man, a scavenger of Paris, who first rushed to her hotel with the news that her dire vengeance had been satiated. "Ah, mon ami!" exclaimed she; "welcome, welcome! Is it indeed true? Are you very sure of the fact? That wicked, perfidious tyrant! can he be dead. Mon Dieu! what joy! what triumph! The only drawback to my content is that he knew not before

the dukes de Guise, de Nevers, and de Nemours, peers of foreign royal extraction. See Henry III., his Court and Times.

[1] Serment du Roy de Navarre, avec un serment réciproque des princes du sang et autres ducs et pairs, le 4 Aout, 1589 Paris, 1589, in 8vo. De Thou, liv. 97.

he died, that it was from my hand the blow came!" The duchess, her brother Mayenne, and all the leaders of the factions laid aside the black scarf with which they girt themselves when in public, after the assassination of the duke de Guise and the cardinal his brother, and assumed green scarfs.[1] The black draperies were taken down from the churches, the bells pealed, bonfires blazed, and agents of the princes made ready in the principal squares for a midnight carouse. The same afternoon, madame de Montpensier, and her mother, the duchess de Nemours,[2] traversed the streets of Paris in an open car drawn by six horses. At intervals, during her progress, madame de Montpensier harangued the mob. The princesses alighted at the great Franciscan monastery. This convent was a favourite resort of Henry III., who had holden many chapters of his order of St. Esprit in its lofty chapel. The duchesse de Nemours ascended the steps of the high altar, and addressed an assembly of people, admitted by the command of madame de Montpensier. The proposal made by the duchess, that a deputation should wait upon the mother of the

[1] "La livrée des fous."

[2] Anne d'Este, daughter of Ercole II, duke of Ferrara and Renée de France. She espoused François, duke de Guise, and afterwards, on the assassination of the duke, Jacques de Savoye, duke de Nemours, by whom she had two sons, the duke de Nemours, governor of Paris for the League, and the marquis de St. Sorlin.

regicide, Jacques Clément, and invite her to visit Paris, was received with acclamation. A public subscription was announced for the benefit of the mother of the martyr, whom a turbulent priest of Paris blasphemously hailed, on her arrival in the capital, with the ejaculation of the Israelitish woman, recorded by the Evangelist St. Luke.[1] Throughout the night, wild revelry convulsed the capital. The partisans of Mayenne[2] held counsel in the saloons of madame de Montpensier, at the hôtel de Montmorency. Crucé, Sesnault, the chevalier d'Aumale, and the leaders of the Paris democrats, with madame de Ste. Beuve, and others, assembled at the Hôtel de Ville. The royalists, few in number, and exposed to countless perils, illuminated their houses in obedience to the mandate of the Seize; and hid themselves in trembling apprehension. The hotel of the Spanish ambassador, Don Bernardino de Mendoza, was thronged with excited guests. The golden pistoles of the ambassador, his plausible promises and insinuating demeanour, had already won for Philip II. an ascendancy in the capital, equal to that of Mayenne. Within the walls of Paris, therefore, as of old, raged the

[1] Luke, chap. xi. verse 27.

[2] Charles de Lorraine Guise, duke de Mayenne, brother of the duke de Guise, and of the cardinal de Guise slain at Blois, 1588, chief of the League.

faction of Lorraine, nominally supported by the Catholic king; the party favourable to the proclamation of Henri Quatre, on condition of his abjuration of Calvinistic heresy, and now termed Les Politiques; while the third faction was that of the turbulent cabal, headed by Crucé, Bussy-le-Clerc, and the chevalier d'Aumale, hostile alike to the supremacy of Mayenne, and to the royal claims of Henry IV.—agitators—for the most part in the pay of Spain.

At daybreak, on Thursday, August 4th, the combat between MM. de Marivaux and Marolles, took place on a plot of ground lying between the royal camp and the walls of the city. M. de Marivaux, the self-constituted champion of the royalists, was a cavalier of great repute in arms; and whose prowess in single combat had frequently gained him the honours of the tourney. Marolles, the cavalier of the League, accepted Marivaux's challenge to combat—a cartel which the late king sanctioned. Marivaux repaired to the *rencontre* in high spirits, entertaining his seconds with scoffing jests on the inferiority of his adversary. In his boastful security, Marivaux purposely neglected to close the vizor of his helmet. The combat commenced, when the lance of his adversary penetrated the aperture, and entered the eye of the unfortunate Marivaux, who fell from his horse mortally wounded. This incident

which was witnessed from the walls of the beleaguered city by a dense concourse, so encouraged the soldiers of the League, that a *sortie* was instantly made to attack the outposts of the royal army; which being gallantly repulsed, a skirmish ensued, when the young count d'Auvergne distinguished himself. On the ramparts were mesdames de Montpensier and de Guise, who encouraged their partisans by waving green scarfs.

In the camp of the king, meanwhile, the greatest suspense prevailed. The common soldiers clamoured for their arrears of pay; and demanded security for the payment of their future stipends. Many secretly quitted the camp, and dispersed over the adjacent country, living by rapine. The vassals of several of the great lords retired in bands, some at the secret instigation of their chieftains; others superciliously proclaimed their intent to visit their families, and cultivate their lands, pending the six months which his majesty had engaged to devote to theological studies.

On the morning of the 4th of August, during the skirmish before the walls of the capital, the duke d'Epernon sought audience of the king and demanded *congé*. The duke stated that the late king had given him permission to visit his young consort, Catherine de Foix, at Angoulême.

To his friends, Epernon owned to scruples in serving a heretic king; and although Henry's proclamation had been a matter of expediency, yet it was not desirable, until after his majesty's reconciliation with the church, that the fall of Paris should establish his dominion. It was also suspected, that the coldness of Epernon, arose from dread lest the king, aware of his immense wealth, should ask a loan; or propose to levy a contribution on the vast heritage of the duchess d'Epernon, whose lands, as heiress of Candale Captal de Buch, lay within the territory of Béarn. The king offered no remonstrance, nor sought to induce the duke to alter his determination. He coldly gave the desired permission, though the departure of Epernon severed from the army a body of four thousand troops. The example of Epernon proved infectious; many other nobles solicited a like indulgence, and prepared to depart.[1] Louis de l'Hôpital, seigneur de Vitry, however, alone went over to the League, alleging that he saw no security in the king's fine promises; and that he would not commit the mortal sin of bearing arms for a Huguenot, against the Holy Union. The count de Villars,[2]

[1] Amongst these personages, were the duke de la Tremouille, the marshal de Dampierre, the count de Choisy, MM. de St. Gelais and de Boullaye.

[2] George de Braucas, count and marquis de Villars. He es-

also placed in Henry's hands his resignation of his office of governor of Poissy and the adjacent district; and retired to his estates in Provence, followed by two hundred horse. Henry immediately gave the vacant government to Philibert, count de Grammont, the son of his mistress, the fair Corisandre.[1] Undaunted by these flagrant desertions, Henry, confident in his own resources, and inured to a life of hardship and disappointment, decided to raise the siege of Paris and retire into Normandy, to meet the succour promised him by his faithful ally, Elizabeth, queen of England, and to secure the places reduced by Montpensier. The king keenly felt the contemptuous bearing of the insolent and pampered nobles of the late reign. He, therefore, resolved that mighty victories, and the renown of heroic deeds, should bring these recusant lords to his footstool; and obliterate the memory of his vassalage at the court of Henry III., and the present ridicule accruing from the life of shameless licence led by his consort, queen Marguerite.

poused Juliette Hippolyte d'Estrées, sister of Gabrielle d'Estrées.

[1] Madame de Guiche—who displayed the most intractable disposition, and, as yet, governed the king more completely than any other lady. In a letter, written to Henry while king of Navarre, she calmly tells him, "qu'elle ne le voulait pas du mal; mais qu'elle ne pouvait s'assurer d'une chose si mobile que lui!" Lettres de Henri IV. Paris, 1814.

The interment of the mortal remains of the late king was a duty which Henry had also to perform. The League held St. Denis; and the hate displayed for the memory of the deceased by his subjects at Paris rendered it inexpedient to deposit the body in the church of St. Cloud.

During the afternoon of Thursday, August 4th., king Henry assembled the nobles at Poissy, to announce his resolves.[1] First, his majesty confirmed many of the old privy counsellors of Henry III. in their offices; and directed them to repair to Tours, whither the parliament had been translated by the late king. Henry, also, intimated his royal will that the council of state established by Henry III. in the city of Tours, for the internal administration of the realm, should be deemed *en permanence* until the surrender of the capital admitted again of its transfer to the Louvre. The chief members of this council were, the cardinals de Vendôme and de Lenoncourt, Montholon keeper of the seal, and the secretaries of state Beaulieu and Revol. Henry, moreover, directed that the act of his recognition, signed by the nobles, should be pre-

[1] The king wrote to M. de Poyanne (archives de Poyanne), "J'ai promis de me gouverner, pour le bon et prudent conseil d'un prince de mon sang, et ne rien innover en la religion catholique, ains la conserver de tout mon pouvoir, ensemble les ecclésiastiques."—Lettres missives de Henri IV., Bibl. Imp. F. de Fontette, portef. 6.

sented for registration to the parliament assembled in Tours. To the assembly, the king also submitted an address to the nation, which he was about to issue. Its tone was firm and dignified. His majesty then pronounced an oration on the present condition of affairs. He commented on the shallow pretext of those persons who, on account of his faith, had determined to leave the camp. "Such persons doubtless," said his majesty, "hope by this conduct to compel me to abjure my religion. Let every man present, however, assure himself that I esteem not the realm of France, nor even the empire of the whole world, sufficiently to renounce my religion; nor will I ever accept other doctrine in lieu, unless such shall be confirmed and proposed by a general council, as, messieurs, I have before explained. You know that I am a good Frenchman, and that I have a sincere and true heart. I have been king of Navarre for seventeen years, and during that period I believe that I have never violated my word; although repeated opportunity has been afforded me to avenge myself on foes who so shamelessly traduce me. Consider, I pray you, messieurs, how hard and unjust a thing it must appear to me, this attempt on your part to coerce me in religious matters, when I, who am your king and master, permit you to enjoy perfect freedom of conscience. I appeal

to you, and to the nation. Meantime, I beg that each one of you will pray that God Almighty may enlighten my conscience, direct my counsels, and bless my endeavours."[1] Henry next proclaimed his intention to withdraw from before Paris, to perform the obsequies of his predecessor; and to reinforce the garrisons of the province of Normandy. The great besieging army, therefore, which despite numerous defections yet maintained an imposing array, was divided into three sections, respectively to be commanded by the king, by the duke de Longueville, and by the marshal d'Aumont. The duke de Longueville was directed to enter Picardy; and to d'Aumont and his division was assigned the task of checking the generals of the League in Champagne and the adjacent districts. The duke d'Epernon, at the head of his four thousand mercenaries, graciously announced his intention to traverse Lorraine, and establish his head-quarters at Angoulême.

Henry, meantime, before he withdrew from Paris, made overtures to Mayenne and the League. The ex-secretary of state, Villeroy, had joined the duke de Mayenne, who caused his name to be enrolled amongst the forty autocrats of the Hôtel

[1] De Thou, liv. 97. Harangue et déclaration faite par le roy de France, Henri IV. devant sa ville de Paris—Mém. de la Ligue, t. 4. Mém du duc d'Angoulême.

de Ville. Excessive resentment at his dismissal by the late king from office, and at the treacherous slaughter of the Guises, had exasperated the mind of Villeroy. Besides, his summary ejectment from office reduced Villeroy to great pecuniary straits. The troops of the League occupied his lands in the neighbourhood of Paris; while madame de Montpensier made Villeroy's presence in the capital, and his political aid, the price of the restoration of his patrimony. The king appreciated the acute intellect and ambitious aspirations of the ex-secretary, who, trained in the subtle political creed of Catherine de Medici, found his colleagues of the Seize but rude associates. Accordingly, Henry sent a secret message to Villeroy, requesting the latter "to meet him in the Bois de Boulogne, as he wished to make him the bearer of certain overtures of peace to M. de Mayenne." Villeroy, overjoyed at this communication, and being likewise apprized of the departure from the camp of M. d'Epernon, his implacable foe, waited upon the duke de Mayenne and requested permission to seek audience of the new king. Mayenne preremptorily refused the request. Villeroy, therefore, in the present juncture of affairs, thinking it inexpedient to renounce his connection with the Union, temporized. He sent an envoy to Henry, stating his embarrassment, and praying

his majesty to accredit an agent, who might explain his designs and future policy. The king, therefore, sent his private secretary, the sieur de Marsillière, with instructions to propose nothing until his mission was recognized by his presentation to Mayenne. Villeroy in vain adjured the duke to listen to the proposals offered. "Unite, monseigneur, with the great catholic party, in summoning Le Béarnnois to abjure his heresy on ascending the throne of St. Louis; his majesty will not dare resist. Reject the opportunity, and you yourself will sooner or later fall before the fury of faction, or the hatred of Spain!" The astute secretary, nevertheless, found that his appeal failed to move the duke. Stolid and self-satisfied, the mind of Mayenne could contain one sentiment only, but upon that one idea he acted with invincible perseverance. Hard was it, as madame de Montpensier found, to endow the duke with a fresh inspiration; but more difficult still was it to procure the expulsion of such idea, when once comprehended and digested. Mayenne therefore replied:—"That he declined to enter into relations with the king of Navarre. That his faith and his inclination compelled him to acknowledge M. le cardinal de Bourbon as his king. That M. de Guise, his brother, had taken arms during the late reign to prevent the sceptre from falling into the hands

of a heretic prince; and it could not be expected that he should consent to any negotiation likely to bring obloquy on the memory of his said brother; or to incur the charge of inconsistency, or of flagrant disloyalty to the said cardinal, his king."[1]

Henry, therefore, finding concession and negotiation alike unavailing, prepared for his temporary retreat from Paris. The remains of the late king, embalmed and enclosed in a leaden coffin, were conveyed from St. Cloud to Beaumont on the fifth day of August. The king dislodged the same day from St. Cloud. His division of the army was composed of two thousand horse and four thousand infantry, besides two Swiss regiments numbering one thousand five hundred men. Henry was attended by the most valiant of the Huguenot nobles—Châtillon, Rosny, Caumont de la Force, Ségur, La Rochefoucauld, and others. A brilliant band of orthodox nobles also followed their sovereign, scorning to imitate the lukewarm zeal of the deserters of St. Cloud; and eagerly seeking participation in the future triumphs of the victor of Coutras. The chief amongst these cavaliers were the duke de Montpensier, the young count d'Auvergne, the prince de Conti, the brave Biron, Damville, heir of

[1] Mém. de Nicholas de Neuville, sieur de Villeroy, écrite de sa main.

Montmorency, the provost-marshal Duplessis Richelieu, M.M. de Bellegarde, d'O, Chemerault, and Givry. Henry marched straight to Compiègne, where he resolved to deposit the body of Henry III., pending its transfer to the cathedral church of St. Denis. On the road, he assaulted and took the towns of Creil-sur-Oise, Meulant, Clermont, and Gisors. During the combat which preceded the surrender of these places, the funeral cortége halted by the roadside, and was guarded by a company of halberdiers. Henry remained one day in Compiègne, and was present at the obsequies of Henry III. at the abbey of St. Corneille. The following day he visited the duchesse de Montmorency [1] at her château of Marlou; and on the 24th day of August the king encamped at Darnetal, a village in the vicinity of Rouen—a city, one of the bulwarks of the League.

Whilst Henry was at Darnetal he received a missive from his consort, queen Marguerite. The queen, who then occupied the castle of Usson, in Auvergne, where her scandalous *liaison*

[1] Antoinette de la Marck, daughter of Robert de la Marck, marshal duke de Bouillon, and of Françoise de Brezé, daughter of madame de Valentinois. She espoused Henry, afterwards duke de Montmorency, marshal of France, January, 1558. The eldest daughter of the duchesse, Madeleine Charlotte de Montmorency, was affianced to the young count d'Auvergne. The duke gave his daughter the enormous dowry of 150,000 gold crowns.

with the marquis de Canillac afforded the enemies of the royal cause another theme for pungent satire, wrote to congratulate Henry on his accession, and to pray that her revenue might now be augmented. Henry, who was sensible of the power which Marguerite's beauty and address gave her over the minds of most men—an influence which the queen had recklessly exercised during the preceding reign—wrote to promise compliance with her pecuniary demand when the condition of his finances permitted. The king, however, intimated his royal will that the queen should not quit her present refuge of Usson; and hinted that her majesty's disregard of this desire might be followed by incarceration in one of the strongholds of Guyenne. In Paris, meantime, diversity of counsel and clamour of party continued without respite. From the moment of the decease of Henry III., Mayenne found himself opposed by a powerful competitor in the person of the Spanish ambassador. Mendoza openly claimed the crown for Philip II. as the husband of Elizabeth de Valois, eldest sister of the deceased king; or, at least, for the Infanta Isabel, the elder of the two daughters of that princess. "The male posterity of Henry II. is extinct. Her highness our Infanta is now the undoubted representative of the august line of Valois! Away with the barbarous Salique law! Away with the

remote claims of the Béarnnois!" The words and attitude of Mendoza infuriated the duchesse de Montpensier. The assassination of Henry III., instead of accelerating the elevation of her brother Mayenne to the throne, which she had been pleased to proclaim vacant, had, on the contrary, raised insuperable obstacles to her ambitious designs.[1] Without the gold, and the aid of the armies of Spain, the heretic Béarnnois, recognized by the princes of the realm, must soon enter prostrate Paris.

The ambassador of the duke of Savoy, meantime, laid his master's pretensions to the crown of France before the supreme council of Union. The claims of the duke of Savoy were, as he said, threefold. His mother was Marguerite, daughter of Francis I.; his wife was doña Catalina, youngest daughter of Philip II. and Elizabeth de Valois; and his religious faith was orthodox and fervid. The pretensions of Henri de Lorraine, duc de Bar, eldest son of Claude, duchesse de Lorraine, second sister of the deceased king, awakened in the mind of madame de Montpensier far more jealous apprehension. The claims of

[1] The partisans of the princes of Lorraine-Guise claimed the throne for them, as the lineal descendants of the Carlovingian monarchs, traitorously superseded by Hugues Capet and his race. It was overlooked that the Guises were only cadets of their house of Lorraine; and, therefore, that the supposed right must appertain to the chief of their lineage.

her grandson had been recognized by queen Catherine de Medici. The duke was the future chief of Lorraine; he was at the head of a disciplined body of troops; and his arrival in the capital was daily expected. Several of the turbulent *curés* proposed that the young duke de Guise,[1] who was then a prisoner in the citadel of Tours, should be proclaimed king! Affairs were rendered still more complicated by the arrival, on the evening of the 6th of August, of letters from the nuncio Morosini, dated from Lyons, in which the cardinal commanded the council of Union to suspend its decision on the important matters under discussion until after the arrival of the legate-extraordinary whom his holiness intended to accredit. The duke de Mayenne and his sister, therefore, resolved upon the immediate proclamation of the cardinal de Bourbon as king of France. The recognition of the cardinal, on the demise of Henry III., had been guaranteed by the treaty of Joinville,[2] under the sign-manual of the princes of Lorraine. His age and infirmities were such that his reign could be one of transition only; while the proclamation of the cardinal would give respite to the factions, and enable the princes of Lorraine to organize their

[1] Henri de Guise, son of the 'great duke,' killed at the States of Blois, and of Catherine de Clèves, countess d'Eu.

[2] Henry III, his Court and Times, vol. ii. p. 385.

schemes for the ultimate disposal of the crown. The intelligence, also, that Henri IV. had marched and encamped before Rouen, created the utmost dismay. It was hastily resolved, therefore, that after the proclamation of Charles X, Mayenne should take the field at the head of the entire army of the Union, and pursue and capture Le Navarrois and his *corps d'armée* before his junction with the English succour which was about to sail from Portsmouth.

On the 7th of August, therefore, after five days of tumultuous cabals and excesses, the leading demagogues of Paris met in the Hôtel de Ville. The proclamation of the cardinal was agreed to amid cheers and mocking laughter. Mendoza waved his plumed hat, and first cried "*Vive el rey don Carlos X.!*" No one was the dupe of this demonstration: all felt that the name of the imbecile old prelate—a captive in the power of Le Béarnnois—had been used only to allow leisure to each faction to organize its conspiracies for the final appropriation of the crown. The League had need, meantime, of a phantom king, whose name might serve as a rallying point, in opposition to the legitimate pretensions of Henri Quatre. The edict was, therefore, issued, August 7th, which proclaimed the cardinal de Bourbon king, under the title of Charles X,[1]

[1] De Thou, liv. 97. Cayet. Régistres de l'Hôtel de Ville.

The same day the edict was presented to the parliament of Paris by its first president, Brisson, and immediately accepted; though its registration was delayed. The duke de Mayenne, as lieutenant-general of the realm, then announced that the three hundred Huguenot citizens and gentlemen incarcerated during the night of the 30th of July in the Bastille, at the suit of madame de Montpensier, as hostages for the life of the regicide Jacques Clément, should be liberated.[1] The same evening, the duke de Mayenne wrote circular letters to the governors of provinces and towns appertaining to the Union, recounting the decease of Henry III. and the election of Charles X.—the orthodox and legitimate heir of the realm. He stated that the violent death of the late king was a judgment sent by the Almighty to punish his enormous impiety and cruelty; that until the present auspicious moment the Holy League had had to combat the secret inroads of heresy; but now the crown itself was boldly claimed as the heritage of a contumacious apostate. "We cannot, therefore, doubt that now, in this our hour of peril and necessity, his Catholic majesty, the most potent and religious of monarchs, will openly favour our righteous cause," wrote Mayenne. "During the reign of the late king Henry, his Catholic majesty, swayed by the most

[1] L'Etoile, Journal de Henri III.

delicate and generous of scruples, hesitated to send us succours. The case is now reversed—our legitimate king, Charles X., is in durance, and the kingdom convulsed by the audacious rebellion of Le Navarrois." The duke, as lieutenant-general of the realm, orders the new king to be proclaimed; and directs that public edicts should be issued in his majesty's name. Mayenne then wrote to Philip II., praying for succours; and announcing his intention to pursue the Navarrois to the coasts of Normandy, and compel him to take ship for England, or to surrender himself a prisoner.

The parliament of Toulouse, meanwhile, published a manifesto against the claims of the king, in which Henry was branded in terms of gross personal abuse. These fanatics, who by their turbulent violence had ever augmented the troubles of the realm, took oath as a body never to recognize Le Béarnois, deriding the supposition that the son of Jeanne d'Albret could be induced to abjure his faith. The parliament of Bordeaux, under the able prompting of the marshal de Matignon, adopted a more moderate course, and issued an edict denouncing pains and penalties against the slayers of the late king; but scrupulously refrained from making mention of Henry IV. Tours, Rennes, Dieppe, Langres, Chalons, Compiègne, and Clermont were the only towns

of the realm which openly hailed the accession of the king. In Languedoc the duke de Montmorency[1] held aloof, feeling neither zeal nor sympathy for a heretic king; and yet loathing the frantic treason of the Paris league. Dauphiny was governed by Lesdiguières,[2] who, while acknowledging the sacred rights of the king, yet declared his opinion that no heretic might hope permanently to wield the sceptre of St. Louis. Even Tours and its faithful parliament trembled for the king amid perils, alienation, and desertions so flagrant, and sent a deputation to Henri Quatre to suggest the expediency of associating the name of the king of the League with his own royal title!

Meanwhile, the tempest gathered which seemed about to overwhelm the Béarnois and his heroic followers. Mayenne marshalled his army outside the walls of Paris. The death of Henry III. removed all scruples, all restraints of loyal fealty. The eldest son of the duke de Lorraine arrived at the head of one thousand horse and two thousand foot. The duke of Parma, at the bidding

[1] Henri, marshal duke de Montmorency, second son of the constable Anne de Montmorency, and of Madeleine de Savoye Villars. He was, during the reign of Henry III., a chief leader of the party termed Les Politiques, and governed Languedoc with almost absolute sway.

[2] François de Bonne, duke de Lesdiguières, afterwards constable of France.

of the Spanish ambassador, sent a succour of five hundred horse and a battalion of Walloon soldiers. The duke de Nemours brought the trained bands of the Lyonnais; and Balagny the garrison of the Cambresis. The six thousand Swiss garrisoned in Paris joined the army; while Bassompierre led four thousand German reiters, which he enlisted by the aid of the Spanish viceroy. The army of the League exceeded twenty-eight thousand men, all, for the most part, veteran soldiers, ardent for the faith, and inflamed with no common zeal to distinguish themselves in the eyes of madame de Montpensier and her associates, the heroines of the League. At the same time, news arrived of the invasion of Provence by the troops of the duke of Savoye. The duke excused his enterprise on the ground that the late king and the states of Blois having declared war against Savoy on the matter of the marquisate of Saluzzo, he was justified in making timely reprisals. By the first day of September, all was ready "to pursue and annihilate the heretic usurper." The windows of the rue St. Antoine, even before the march of the army, were let at fabulous prices to individuals who anticipated the return of Mayenne leading in triumph his captive, Henri le Béarnnois![1]

[1] Madame de Montpensier announced, "qu'on ammeneroit en triomphe à Paris le Béarnnois garotté." Décade du Roy Henri le Grand—Le Grain, liv. v.

Before the departure of Mayenne, the Parisian demagogues regaled themselves with a religious procession on a grand scale through the streets of the capital, to convey the ashes of the regicide Clément to the cathedral of Nôtre Dame. These processions, which during the few months subsequent to the demise of the duke de Guise were of daily occurrence, had fallen somewhat in public favour, on account of the death of numerous individuals from exposure to the cold. At daybreak of the 24th of August, eighteen penitents of both sexes departed by boat to St. Cloud, taking with them vases and baskets to carry back mould gathered from beneath the pile on which the body of Clément was consumed; the ashes of the "sainted martyr" being supposed therein to mingle. On their return, the boat, being too heavily laden, foundered, and the greater part of these fanatics perished. A procession of half-clad penitents, with flags, banners, and torches meantime perambulated the streets, and waited to escort the relics to Nôtre Dame, chanting dirges and litanies. Madame de Montpensier walked in the procession barefoot, clad in sackcloth, her hair streaming over her naked shoulders. Madame de Ste. Beuve and the chevalier d'Aumale followed. Afterwards came a long array of profligates of both sexes, singing blasphemous songs, interrupted by shouts of

"Dies iræ" whenever they passed before a representation of the murder of the king, which many of the fiercest Leaguers had caused to be chalked on black cloth and suspended from their windows. The wailing and tumult were great when the news spread of the catastrophe which had happened to the deputies sent to St. Cloud; and of the submersion of the precious relics in the Seine. The torches were extinguished, the banners lowered, and the penitents dispersed, to meet again on the morrow to attend a solemn Requiem performed in Nôtre Dame for the persons drowned.[1]

The king, after menacing Rouen, which was defended by the duc d'Aumale — who, after his famous flight from Senlis, found it impossible to confront the wits of Paris—dislodged and encamped before Eu. The design of the king was to approach the coast, and receive the succours sent by Elizabeth, before engaging in actual conflict with the army of the Union. Henry, accompanied by Biron, departed secretly with three hundred horse in gallant array for Dieppe, to make a *reconnoissance*, with the intent of there forming an entrenched camp. The entire army of the king consisted of six thousand infantry, and a body of fourteen hundred horse.

[1] Journal de Henri III—L'Etoile. De Thou, Hist. de son Temps.

Eu surrendered on the 4th of September; and as the county appertained to Catherine, the widowed duchesse de Guise, the inhabitants were severely mulcted.

While Henry was still before Eu, the alarming news reached the royal camp of the proclamation of Charles X. as king of France; and of the march of Mayenne at the head of twenty-eight thousand men in pursuit of the royal army. The extremity of the king appeared desperate. Mayenne, contrary to probability and his usual caution, assembled his army, issued his proclamation, and by the rapidity of his march had prevented the king from reinforcing his army by a junction with the divisions under Longueville and Aumont. Shut within the pays de Caux, the Channel behind, the powerful army of the League confronting him, there seemed no resource for the king but surrender, or an ignominious flight into England.

The spirit and resolution of the king, however, never quailed; his fearless gaiety and merry wit restored confidence to the soldiers. Henry remembered, and adopted the motto of his heroic mother, Jeanne d'Albret: "*à cœur vaillant, rien d'impossible!*" He trusted in God, and in his good sword and righteous cause, for extrication from peril apparently overwhelming. It was first resolved, therefore, to remove the old

cardinal de Bourbon from the castle of Chinon to the fortress of Fontenoy, in Poitou. The sieur de Chavigny, commandant of Chinon, though a faithful adherent, was blind and infirm. It was deemed necessary, therefore, to confide the custody of the king of the League to a guardian able, competent, and capable of penetrating the subtle intrigues of madame de Montpensier.

M. Duplessis Mornay, governor of Saumur, was therefore, despatched to Chinon, to conduct the cardinal to Fontenoy; he being especially charged to show the venerable prelate every possible indulgence, and to deliver a consolatory message from the king.[1] After the departure of the dowager queen Louise from Chinon, the life of the cardinal had been sad and monotonous. From the summit of his lofty tower, la tour d'Argenton, the cardinal gazed down upon a rich and sunny landscape, varied enough to recall reminiscences of the beautiful pleasaunce and hanging gardens of his castle of Gaillon. When Duplessis Mornay unfolded his mission, the cardinal wept bitterly. Vernages, his old and attached valet, remarked thereupon: "That his eminence would have been wise to have had no dealings with the League." "Do you believe, Vernages, they would not have

[1] Hist. de la Vie de Messire Philippe de Mornay, seigneur du Plessis, redigée par de Liques sur les Mémoires de Charlotte Arbaleste, épouse du dit Duplessis Mornay, liv. i.

made war on my house, even had I not joined?" sorrowfully responded the cardinal. "At least, whilst I live, it is a Bourbon they acknowledge. Nevertheless, the king, my nephew, will eventually prevail. I am only temporary guardian of his crown!" The following day, under the escort of Mornay, Charles X.[1] arrived at Fontenoy; and was delivered to the custody of the sieur de Boulaye, a sturdy Huguenot soldier. The king, moreover, sent an express to the duke de Longueville, and to the marshal d'Aumont, to hasten to his succour. He likewise despatched Beauvais le Nocle to queen Elizabeth, to advertise her majesty concerning his precarious position; and to request the immediate aid of men, and of vessels of war to transport him, if requisite, to La Rochelle. At this important council, Henry also resolved upon sending an embassage to Rome, in the hope of conciliating Sixtus V., and of preventing the recognition of Charles X. by the Holy See. The duke de Piney Luxembourg being a personage in favour, both with the king and the orthodox members of the council, was nominated chief of this mission. The duke

[1] "M. le cardinal voulut tergiverser, alléguant n'avoir son équipage prêt; mais M. du Plessis réplique en toute révérence, qu'il ne lui pouvoit donner que demi heure." Ibid. Giraud, in his Life of the duke d'Epernon, states that the latter had been negotiating with madame de Chavigny for the surrender of the cardinal into his hands.

was commissioned to express the wish felt by his Christian majesty to be relieved from the pontifical censures; in token of which, king Henry "was desirous of reconsidering the matters at issue between the Roman Catholics and Reformed creeds; the which his majesty very diligently intended to study when the cessation of the war left him greater mental and personal liberty."[1] Henry, when he made these reiterated declarations, was at heart a second time ready to abjure the reformed faith. His religion was but his party badge—the *cri de guerre* which had enabled him during the late reign to arm in defence of his liberty, of his maternal heritage of Béarn, and for the maintainance of his eventual right to the throne of the *fleurs de lis*. The nasal drawl and sanctimonious mien of his ministers always highly diverted the king. At this time, when the future depended on the momentous issue of his struggle with the advancing hosts of Spain and the League, Henry felt no truer reverence for his faith than when, at Nérac, he was seen to while away the dreariness of a *prêche* by eating cherries, and throwing the stones into the face of the minister des Amours![1] It was further resolved to convoke the states of the realm to meet at Tours during the following month of November; when the united counsel of the three estates would enable his majesty to take

[1] Henry III. his Court and Times, vol. ii. p. 301.

the steps deemed advantageous for the national welfare.

These enactments decided upon and expedited, Henry marched and encamped at Arques, a small unfortified town four miles south-east of Dieppe. The king continued to display the greatest serenity of mind. His energy and activity were quenchless —the fortifications of the camp were constructed under his guidance; the adjacent country surveyed, and no precaution neglected to enable his troops to maintain their position under the formidable onslaught of Mayenne. All the territory that now remained to Henri le Grand was the few miles of country intervening between his camp and the sea-shore! Henry's positions were taken with admirable skill and knowledge of military tactics, as practised in the sixteenth century. The port of Dieppe lay on the right, its sea-board defended by a strong castle and fortifications. On the land side, the country was rough and uneven, and overrun for miles by patches of scrub-wood. From the beach, two steep and woody ridges rose, extending back many leagues into the country. Between these hills was a narrow valley, through the midst of which flowed the little river Béthune. At high tide, the river overflowed its banks, submerging the valley, which rendered approach to the town nearly impossible by this route. Upon the hill to

the left, stood the castle of Arques. At the base of this hill, winding round the village of Arques, which was commanded by its castle, was a circuitous road leading straight to the chief gate of Dieppe. Beyond was a plain, upon which stood the large village of Martineglise, and a hospital for lepers, called by the people of the district La Maladrerie. The king established his head quarters in the castle Arques and fortified himself by digging a trench eight feet wide, to encircle the castle with its adjacent suburb. Peasants from the neighbourhood, the soldiers, officers, and even the king himself, diligently worked at the trenches. Within, earth-works were constructed and fortified with cannon—all being accomplished with extraordinary activity. The king posted his French infantry in the castle; while he stationed Biron, at the head of the Swiss regiments, and one thousand musketeers, in the village of Arques. Thus Henry fortified the two chief approaches to the port of Dieppe. A second path, however, on the brow of the hill to the right, led to a populous faubourg of Dieppe, called Pollet, which was divided from the town by a movable bridge across the harbour. Within this faubourg, the king posted a powerful body of troops, and environed it on three sides by a trench extending in the form of a triangle, which he fortified by eight

pieces of artillery. Across the valley, so as to enclose the Maladrerie, Biron constructed another trench, which he defended by inner works, and barricaded with the baggage waggons of the army.[1] Biron then posted in the Maladrerie three companies of Swiss, and three hundred musketeers: outside the works, he placed a body of two hundred Swiss under their colonel, Galati. Henry and his officers conjectured that the plan of the duke de Mayenne would be to attempt to seize Dieppe by marching along the straight and level road, which led to the city walls under the brow of the hill, at the base of which was the king's camp at Arques.

Meanwhile, the great army marched from Paris, recruiting its ranks by the addition of the garrisons of the fortified places of Normandy. After the junction of Aumale[2] and the garrison of Rouen, the army of the League numbered thirty thousand men, provided with a powerful train of artillery, and with great stores of ammunition. France

[1] Deville—Hist. du Château d'Arques. Valori, Journal Militaire de Henri IV. p. 54.

[2] Charles de Lorraine, duc d'Aumale, son of Claude, duc d'Aumale—fourth son of Claude de Lorraine, first duke de Guise—and of Louise de Brezé Maulevrier. He was born in 1555, and died in Brussels, 1631. He married Marie, eldest daughter of René, marquis d'Elbœuf, by whom he had one daughter, Anne, heiress of Aumale. The duke d'Aumale was a furious and zealous Leaguer, and never would make submission to Henry IV.

watched its progress with trembling anxiety: the royal career of the Béarnois seemed well nigh extinct. The English succour tarried. Longueville was in Champagne. Nothing apparently interposed to save Henry and his handful of Huguenots from being swept into the ocean. Already the League triumphed. Farnese prepared his legions to march upon Paris in support of the right of the Infanta. The cardinal-king was forgotten.

On the 7th of September, Mayenne retook Gournay. On the 10th, the Huguenot garrisons of Eu and Neufchâtel capitulated. Throughout the province of Normandy, every place was now garrisoned by the League—only Dieppe remained to be vanquished by Mayenne.

On the evening of the 12th, a solemn service was celebrated in the royal camp, and the minister Des Amours pronounced an inspiriting address. With steadfast hearts the soldiers of Coutras grasped their swords and vowed to conquer or to die. The same night, Henry wrote to his mistress, madame de Guiche—*la belle Corisandre*: "*Mon cœur*, it is a marvel that I have life in me under my present toils! I am nevertheless well; my affairs go also well. I wait for them! By the help of God, my enemies shall find that this their enterprise is a bad bargain. I embrace

you a million of times.—From the trench at Arques."[1]

At daybreak, Wednesday, September 13th, Mayenne appeared with his army in battle array. The duke's plan of campaign, contrary to the anticipation of the king, was to seize the Faubourg Pollet, which commanded the harbour. This capture, Mayenne foresaw, would effectually prevent the junction of the English troops, and cut off the supply of provisions from the royal camp. The duke made a stand of three hours, hoping to draw Henry from the protection of his trenches; while the duke de Nemours, with a detachment of light horse, scoured the adjacent country. Henry, however, prudently avoided the snare; though he permitted the young count d'Auvergne, whose military ardour against the slayers of his uncle was not to be repressed, to sally forth at the head of his troops, when a slight skirmish ensued.

The duke de Mayenne, meanwhile, finding that the capture of the suburb was not the facile enterprise which he had imagined, quartered his army in the village of Martineglise, in order to give his troops repose before the assault of the castle of Arques. So confident was Mayenne of victory, that he actually named the officers who were to ride post to Paris, to announce the

[1] MS. Bibl. de l'Arsenal—MSS Hist. 179, t. i.

overthrow of le Navarrois to the expectant Leaguers.

For three days the armies thus confronted each other. On the 16th, Mayenne silently dislodged, and, hoping to surprise the king, approached Arques. Ever vigilant, Henry had received intelligence of the proposed attack. The duke, therefore, found the bridges over the river Béthune occupied by the count d'Auvergne and a squadron of light horse, and by a regiment of lancers under Larchant. The duke de Montpensier deployed in front of the Maladrerie, while the artillery of the castle swept the plain. Notwithstanding his superior numbers, and his boastful threat of capturing the Béarnnois within his own trenches, Mayenne, foiled by Henry's tactics, and not having previously made up his mind to offer battle, retired again to Martineglise. The spirit of the royalist soldiers rose; whereas, in the camp of the League, the duke's officers manifested great discontent at his indecision and caution. Nevertheless, they believed that, beset by an army numbering thrice that of the royalists, the king eventually could not escape capture. At length the duke de Mayenne, after much hesitation, resolved to try his fortune in battle against the veteran troops of the king. On the morning of the 21st of September, he ordered M. de Bélin[1]

[1] Jean François de Faudoas, seigneur de Serillac, on the re-

to attack the Maladrerie. Belin's division was composed of German levies under count Collato; and of two infantry regiments under Tremblecourt and M. de la Chasteigneraye.[1]

Collato and the German legion, however, resorted to the most treacherous stratagem to surprise and capture this, the advanced post of the enemy. The regiments under Tremblecourt and Chasteigneraye remained in ambuscade within a little wood skirting the village of Martineglise; while the Germans approached the Maladrerie waving their caps, and by signs and gestures intimating their wish to go over to the royal cause. The discontent of these mercenaries having on the previous day been purposely bruited abroad, Galati and the Swiss regiments fell into the snare, and, with cheers, actually aided the traitors to mount the outer parapet of the work. The Germans instantly turned and assailed the royal troops with muskets and pikes; and such then was the panic, that the Swiss abandoned their posts, and fled in the utmost con-

signation of the duke de Nemours, governor of Paris for the League.

[1] De Thou. Davila. Hist. de la Ligue. The admirable details of the battle of Arques, by the duke d'Angoulême, who then bore the title of count d'Auvergne. Cayet—Chron. Nov. Le Grain Péréfixe. Sully. M. de Nevers. Vie et Mœurs de Henry soi-disant roy de France et de Navarre.—Des Hayes, 1589—Numberless MSS. Bibl. Imp., F. de Béthune.

fusion on to the plain. Tremblecourt and Chasteigneraye rushed at the head of their regiments to the support of Collato and the Germans. The suddenness and impetuosity of the charge overwhelmed the Swiss, who defended the inner works; these soldiers were also soon driven from the Maladrerie, and ignominiously sought safety in flight. The marshal de Biron, in attempting to rally the fugitives, and to lead them to the attack, was wounded and thrown from his horse. The duke de Mayenne, elated with this fortunate commencement, then determined to attack the main body of the royal army. First, he sent a detachment to reinforce Collato and La Chasteigneraye, who, in their turn, had entrenched themselves in the Maladrerie. He then ordered the duke d'Aumale to advance with twelve hundred foot, and attack the division under Montpensier; the duke de Nemours and the count de Sagonne received instructions to force the column of light horse commanded by the count d'Auvergne, and which defended the bridges over the river Béthune. Mayenne then placed himself at the head of the remainder of the army of the League, and bore down straight on Henry's trenches. The conflict was hot and bloody; the soldiers on both sides fought with the utmost animosity. The young count d'Auvergne singled out, and personally engaged with

the count de Sagonne,[1] a malignant Leaguer. D'Auvergne received a pistol-shot on the visor of his helmet which momentarily stunned him; an assault which he avenged by presently inflicting a mortal wound on his adversary. The battle, meanwhile, raged fiercely on the plain. The ranks of the royalist soldiers, though the men performed prodigies of valour, were broken by the irresistible onslaught of Aumale, who sought to redeem his military repute. Battalion after battalion poured down upon the heroic band under Montpensier, which at length, overwhelmed by numbers, was driven back inch by inch to the foot of the hill. There, under the shelter of the cannon of the fortress, the duke maintained a valiant resistance. The king, riding from post to post, fighting with ardour, now heading the assault or rallying some party of fugitives, found himself, on the retreat of Montpensier, abandoned in the midst of the enemy's cavalry. Henry, after leading a charge, had imprudently taken his station at the foot of the hill which commanded the faubourg. Maddened at the shameful repulse of his troops, the king rode forward and exhorted the soldiers of Montpensier's division to charge again, exclaiming, "Can it be that in all France there are not fifty cavaliers courageous and devoted enough to die with

[1] Jean Babou de la Bourdaisière, count de Sagonne.

their king?" Cries of le Béarnois! le Béarnnois! meantime rose in the ranks of the Leaguers. The duke d'Aumale commanded an immediate charge; and the conflict was again vigorously renewed. Aumale despatched an aide-de-camp to hasten the advance of Mayenne and the main army. He sent also the arrogant assurance to his chief, "that le Béarnnois was driven from the plain; and there only remained to bury him within his own trenches of Arques to complete the victory!" The moment was one of exceeding peril. Had the generals of the League possessed even an adequate knowledge of military tactics, the destruction of the royal army, assailed by a force so immeasurably superior, must have been inevitable. Mayenne, fortunately for the king, ever fearful of ambuscades, marched slowly; and frequently halted to allow his troops to form, as he emerged from the steep and broken paths on the hill side. This delay, brief as it was, allowed Henry leisure to rally. Moreover, a succour, unexpected as invincible, hastened to the rescue. Coligny, with two regiments of Huguenot infantry—part of the garrison of the Castle of Arques—perceiving the rout, and the danger of the king, marched with all speed, on his own responsibility, to the aid of his royal master. Suddenly, therefore, when the conflict raged most fiercely round Henry's valiant soldiers, the so-

norous notes of the famed battle-chant of the Huguenot troopers—the heroes of Coutras—struck dismay into the ranks of the enemy. They advanced thundering forth the words:—

Que Dieu se montre seulement,
Et l'on verra en un moment
Abandonner la place.
Le camp des ennemis épars
Epouvanté de toutes parts
Fuira devant ta face!
On verra tout ce camp
Comme l'on voit s'évanouir
Une epaisse fumée.
Comme la cire fond au feu,
Ainsi des méchans devant Dieu
La force est consumée!
Dieu! quand par tes soins et par ta voix
Tu menas ton peuple autrefois
Dans le desert horrible
Les cieux fondirent en sueur
La terre trembla de frayeur.
A ton aspect terrible
Le Mont Sina tout troublé
Dieu d'Israel fut ebranlé![1]

"*Sire! nous voilà! nous mourrons avec vous!*" exclaimed Coligny, as he charged Aumale's division in the rear, with such impetuosity that the troops in a few minutes gave way on all sides, and retreated leaving the marquis

[1] Les Pseaumes de David mis en vers français.—Amsterdam, édit. de Clément Marot, Pseaume 68. De Thou. Davila—Mém. du duc d'Angoulême. Mathieu.

de Belin,[1] and the sieur de Tremblecourt, prisoners of war.

Meanwhile, Biron, at the head of five hundred arquebusiers, attacked the Maladrerie. Galati and the Swiss, having rallied from their panic, joined the marshal. Coligny, after his valiant exploit, reinforced Biron's division by command of the king. The Maladrerie was then assailed with such vigour and success that, at length, Collato's landsknechts were driven from the position, which was again occupied by the royal troops. Henry, during this operation, which it is stated was accomplished in the space of half an hour, again vigorously charged the duke d'Aumale; and after an obstinate fight, which lasted three quarters of an hour, drove him from the plain towards the village of Martineglise. Victory from this period crowned the valiant arms of le Béarnois. The cavalry of the League was broken and routed by the count d'Auvergne, and his maître-de-camp the sieur de Larchant, leaving the king's troops masters of the field. The battle raged during the whole day: the duke de Mayenne therefore, at dusk, sounded a retreat, and retired to his entrenchments at Martineglise. Such was the glorious result of the famous *Journée d'Arques*. The duke de Mayenne had six hundred slain; several hundred men besides were either wounded,

[1] The marquis de Belin was so fascinated by the courtesies of Henry IV., that he afterwards remained a feeble ally of the Holy League.

or remained prisoners of war. The king lost two hundred men, amongst whom was M. de Baqueville, "a resolute, diligent, and valiant soldier." The principal personages amongst king Henry's prisoners were the baron de St. André, the sieur de Serilly, Louis de Beauvau, sieur de Tremblecourt, the marquis de Belin, and others. The triumph in the royal army was great for this important victory. The king, however, openly expressed his amazement at Mayenne's defeat. "My lord of Mayenne," said his majesty, sarcastically, "is not the soldier which every one believes: or he respects his king, and reserves himself and his prowess for a better and more legitimate occasion."[1] The king immediately notified his victory to his parliament and council at Tours; he also despatched letters to Madame de Guiche,[2] and to his loyal servant, Louis de Berthon, sieur de Crillon."[3]

[1] The pope, when he heard of the victory of Arques, exclaimed, that the king would win his crown; "puisqu'il n'était pas plus long-temps au lit que le duc de Mayenne était à table." Sully, Cayet, Nevers, De Thou, Angoulême, Relation du médecin Du Chesne, Cheverny, Davila, and countless other authorities, consulted for the history of La Journée d'Arques.

[2] "J'ai achevé mes conquêtes jusques-au bord de la mer," wrote Henry to madame de Guiche. "Dieu bénisse mon retour, comme il a fait le venir!"

[3] The original of the letter, said to have been written by Henry to Crillon, "Pends toi, brave Crillon; nous avons combattu à Arques et tu n'y étois pas. Adieu, brave Crillon, je vous aime à tort et à travers!" is nowhere extant, and is found

The king's vigilance, however, never once relaxed: he had, it was true, beaten back the foe; but Mayenne and his hosts still lay encamped at Martineglise, and possibly on the morrow intended to renew the combat. The greatest energy prevailed in the royal camp. No public rejoicings were as yet permitted by the king. At this period, the royal finances were so exhausted that Henry maintained no private table; but invited himself to dine first with one officer and then with another, his tact and vivacity rendering his society ever welcome.[1] M. de Menou the brother of M. d'O, who had now made common cause with Epernon, offered the most sumptuous entertainments to his sovereign, whom he affected to patronize.

Henry's trusty ally, the queen of England, meantime, hastened to send him succour. The relation of Beauvais le Nocle had so moved the

in no printed book, before it appeared in the notes appended by Voltaire to his Henriade. There is, however, extant Bibl. Imp. MS. Suppl. F., a letter addressed by Henry IV. to Crillon, just before his entrance into Amiens, dated ce xx. Septembre au camp devant Amiens, 1597, and which commences with the words, "Brave Crillon, pendés vous de n'avoir pas été icy près de moi Lundi dernier à la plus belle rencontre qui se soit jamais veue, et qui peut être se verra jamais, etc." This letter will be given at its proper date, in the future volumes containing the History of the Reign of Henry IV. after his peaceable establishment on the throne.

[1] Mém. de Charles de Valois, duke d'Angoulême.

heart of the queen, that she despatched thirteen vessels to Dieppe laden with presents and ammunition for the king. She also sent the brother of the earl of Essex to announce the immediate sailing of English troops. On the 23rd of September, two days after the battle of Arques, the English flotilla arrived in port. Elizabeth's queenly present consisted of 200,000 livres in specie, seventy thousand pounds of powder, three thousand cannon balls, seven hundred sacks of flour, casks of wine and beer, cloth, shoes for the soldiers, and immense quantities of dry provisions of various kinds. Fifty English gentlemen also were on board, who had sailed from England to "offer their services to the valiant king for the maintainance of his rights, and to learn the art of war under so great a captain." Henry graciously received this gallant band, and gave them honourable posts in his body guard.[1]

The intelligence of the arrival of English ships in the port of Dieppe created consternation in Mayenne's camp. The greatest discord, moreover, prevailed amid the generals of the Union. The duke de Bar[2] openly expressed disgust that Mayenne ventured to assume the supreme command, which he averred belonged to himself, as

[1] Mém. of the duke d'Angoulême, De Thou, Mathieu.

[2] The duke de Bar then bore the title of marquis de Pont-à-Mousson, but to avoid confusion his subsequent title, by which he is best known, has been given.

heir of the chief of Lorraine. The duke d'Aumale and the duke de Nemours indulged in mutual recriminations on the defeat at Arques; and both joined in censuring the timid tactics of Mayenne. The duke, therefore, after an interval of four days, suddenly withdrew by night from Martineglise, and taking a circuitous march of twelve miles, encamped in the village of D'Oissual, between Arques and Dieppe. Henry, however, anticipating this movement, had established himself in Dieppe,[1] and boldly returned the cannonade which Mayenne opened on the city walls. A skirmish ensued on the following day, which ended in the second defeat of the League. At the same time the duke d'Aumale advanced to storm the castle of Arques, which was defended by M. d'Amville, heir of Montmorency. After a combat of two hours, Aumale, never a successful warrior, was compelled to retire with great loss. These repeated reverses greatly disheartened Mayenne. He beheld himself the nominal chief of an army in which every noble aspired to supreme command. His cousin, the chevalier d'Aumale, had presumed on several occasions openly to disobey his mandates. The chevalier,

[1] Davila, liv. 10. "Mes amis," said Henry to the citizens on his entry into Dieppe, "point de cérémonies; je ne demande que vos cœurs, bon pain, bon vin, et bon visage d'hôtes."—Mém. Chron. pour servir à la ville de Dieppe.

through his *liaison* with Madame de Ste Beuve, and his own profligate joviality of temperament, was one of the most popular personages in Paris. La Sainte Veuve,[1] whenever she appeared in public, took every occasion to ridicule Mayenne's torpid sloth, and to vaunt the energy of her hero. Besides, news most disheartening reached Mayenne from his sister Madame de Montpensier. The report of the defeat at Arques had produced tumults in various parts of the capital. A large section of the Seize loudly evoked the protection of the king of Spain—a disposition which the Spanish ambassador Mendoza carefully improved. The duke had sent his sister three standards captured by Collato, on the treacherous surprise by the latter of the royal outpost called La Maladrerie. Madame de Montpensier, therefore, undauntedly denied the truth of the reported defeat; and declared that the news from all parts of the realm was favourable to the cause.[2] In a public harangue, the duchess had the audacity to assure the people that ere long "they should witness the glorious ovation of their general, Mayenne, who would enter Paris dragging the accursed Béarnnois at his chariot wheels!" She, moreover, commanded the standards to be pub-

[1] Madame de Ste. Beuve was derisively termed by the Paris populace, 'la Sainte Veuve.'

[2] De Thou, liv. 97.

licly exhibited; adding to their number eleven banners, which she caused to be privately fabricated at her hôtel. The activity of Madame de Montpensier at this period was unflagging. Her wit, beauty, her riches, and illustrious birth were all rendered subservient to the turbulent hate with which she pursued the royal dynasty. Her powers of flaying ridicule made all tremble, from the haughty Spaniard who ventured to dispute her fiats, to the meanest subordinate of the Seize. To rivet her empire, and to establish her influence over the factious demagogues of the sections, Madame de Montpensier harangued in public, sometimes arrayed as a Minerva—or as Bellona, with cuirass, helmet, and shield. At other times, she showed herself with dishevelled tresses and flowing drapery; she ate in public, prayed aloud in public, and dictated to her secretaries in public. The people gazed in wonder on her frenzied gestures and on her flashing eyes; they remembered that the blood of kings flowed in her veins; and when they listened to the passionate vigour of the words she launched rather than uttered, they bowed at her feet as before one gifted with supernatural light. The wily Mendoza humoured the fallacy, but provided its antidote; for the golden ducats of the king of Spain were more profitable and permanent than the boldest flights of eloquence. The burghers, curés,

and democrats of Paris had already realized the mortifying fact that processions, and the exhibition of the sacred treasures of La Sainte Chapelle and of St. Denis would neither evoke miraculous plenty, nor avert the pangs of present famine. At this juncture it needed all the *verve* and resources of Madame de Montpensier to rally public enthusiasm. Henry III., in execration of whose treacherous deeds so many fearful acts of violence had been perpetrated, was dead; the new king, setting aside his heresy, was revered and admired. The city was purged of many of its most ferocious demagogues, who followed the army of Mayenne. Madame de Ste Beuve languidly mourned the absence of the chevalier d'Aumale. Madame de Guise remembered the alleged rights of her young son the captive of Tours, the heir and eldest born of the "martyred duke;" and therefore looked coldly upon the claim of his uncle Mayenne to the throne. The executive council of the Seize, embarrassed by the proclamation of the cardinal de Bourbon; and ignorant whether the aged prelate acquiesced in his election, issued edicts, in doubt and suspense, in the name of the phantom king. Mendoza fomented the distrust and uneasiness. He perpetually evoked the shield of Spain; and hinted that Paris could alone be deemed safe from the violence of the heretic

usurper when garrisoned by Farnese and his Spaniards; while to Madame de Guise he lauded the virtues of the Infanta, and skilfully joined the name of doña Isabel with that of the heir of the wealth and policy of the Great Duke.

In Normandy, the position of king Henry and the duke de Mayenne began to be reversed. The royal troops, inspirited by victory, and by the expectation of succours, now presumed to pass their entrenchments, and in their turn offer battle to the foe. On the 26th the duke de Longueville, the marshal d'Aumont, La Noue, the great Huguenot captain, and the count de Soissons, arrived with large reinforcements for the royal army, and encamped six leagues from the army of the League. The days of Henry's great necessity were over. Shut up so skilfully, as his enemies believed, in the Pays de Caux, with the ocean alone for his refuge, the indomitable courage and masterly resource of Le Béarnois yet had brought ridicule and shame on his enemies.[1] The duke de Mayenne, therefore, fearing in his turn to be surrounded, raised his camp at dawn, Friday, Sept. 28th; and after firing a volley at the walls of Dieppe, with-

[1] The Pope after the battle of Arques exclaimed: "*Super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis, et conculcabis leonem et draconem.*" Sixtus designated Mayenne as the asp—the cockatrice, the duke de Savoye—the lion, Philip II.; and under the term of dragon [illegible] unt himself.

drew his army, and following the banks of the Somme, marched in the direction of Amiens, where he caused it to be proclaimed that he was about to confer with an emissary from the viceroy Farnese. The king immediately sallied forth from Dieppe in pursuit, and continued to follow the enemy until nightfall. His majesty then returned to Dieppe and despatched the count d'Auvergne and a small body of horse to the duke de Longueville, to warn him of the retreat of Mayenne; for Henry placed no credence in the flimsy pretext that the duke had liberated the royal army solely to confer with the Flemish viceroy. Auvergne also carried a command from the king for his generals to await him at the village of Gamaches, where he intended to repair immediately after the arrival of the English auxiliaries.

These much desired allies, consisting of four thousand English troops and one thousand Scots, entered the port about the 29th day of September. Their commander was Peregrine, lord Willoughby d'Eresby, who immediately notified his arrival to the king. The disembarkation was effected the following day; after which king Henry, accompanied by his officers, paid a visit to the admiral on board the flag-ship. The king was rowed to the ship in a state barge of twelve oars. The chief officers were then pre-

sented to Henry and kissed his hand; the most lively curiosity being evinced to behold a prince so heroic, and favoured by their virgin queen. The king drank queen Elizabeth's health, which was responded to by a salute of artillery. After many complimentary speeches the king took leave, and was aided from the deck into his barge by the admiral and lord Willoughby; to the latter of whom his majesty gave a donation of 500 crowns, to distribute amongst the sailors of the fleet. The vessels, meanwhile, continued to salute until the king landed. The weather was boisterous, and the sea so rough that many cavaliers of his majesty's suite became seriously indisposed; especially as several had too freely partaken of the good cheer provided by the admiral.[1] Before taking leave of the king, the admiral, whose name is not on record, kneeling, presented Henry with a missive from queen Elizabeth. The queen wrote as follows:—

QUEEN ELIZABETH, TO HENRY IV., KING OF FRANCE AND NAVARRE.[2]

"My very dear Brother:—Could I have divined that your own reinforcements[3] would have made so tardy a junction with your army, I would have shown myself more diligent for the transport of those which I now send you. These troops, truly,

[1] Mem. de Charles de Valois, duke d'Angoulême, one of the guests of the English admiral.

[2] MS. Bibl. Imp. Dupuy, 279, 80, 81, p. 23.

[3] The corps d'armée under Longueville and Aumont.

might already have done you service, had it been possible to effect their victualling more promptly. Nevertheless, my brother, I doubt not, now that you have them, that these my good soldiers, will prove eager to do you service, as if they were contending for my own life and honour. As for the valiant baron, my lieutenant,[1] I dare assert that you will find him a true servant of God, loyal to his queen, and noble of heart. I have given this worthy baron strict charge to act as if always in my presence when the opportunity arrives to render you service; and to believe that I personally witness his valour and conduct. Therefore, you may trust this noble gentleman—one discreet as he is valiant. I have, moreover, intimated to him my will that he renders you perfect obedience; also, that neither he, nor the soldiers of his battalion, molest any servant of yours under the pretext of religion; for, my brother, I send them to fight for you, and not to preach.

"I pray you, count upon me as one who deems herself happy to serve you in your need; for God is witness, that daily I supplicate Him to grant you victory over your foes.

"From your very trusty sister and cousin,

"ELIZABETH."

[1] Peregrine, lord Willoughby d'Eresby.

CHAPTER II.

1589—1590.

King Henry repairs to Gamaches.—Reviews his army.—Enthusiasm of the soldiers.—Henry marches upon Paris.—Panic of the citizens.—Successful assault on the Faubourgs.—Marie de Beauvilliers.—She is visited by the king.—The dukes de Mayenne and de Nemours enter Paris.—Their rapturous reception by the people.—Henry withdraws his army from the Faubourgs of Paris.—Abduction of the abbess coadjutress of Montmartre.—Executions in Paris.—Pope Sixtus V.—Gaëtano nominated as cardinal-legate in France.—Progress of the mission of the duke de Luxembourg in Rome.—Incredulity of the supreme pontiff.—Debates at the Hôtel de Ville.—The Seize refuse pecuniary aid to their titular king Charles X.—Embassage from Spain.—Designs and hostile attitude of Philip II.—The duke de Mayenne asserts his independence and dissolves the famous Council of Forty.—Affairs of king Henry at foreign Courts.—Arrival of the king in Tours.—His harangue to the Parliament.—His popularity.—Madame de Beauvilliers.—The duke de Bellegarde.—Henry chooses a ministry.—Members of his council.—Campaign in Normandy. Siege of Meulan.—Arrival of the cardinal-legate Gaëtano.—Orations pronounced.—Negotiations of the League with Spain, and with the duke of Parma, viceroy of Flanders.—Advance of Egmont into France.—Processions in Paris.—Charles X.—The marquise de Guercheville.—Attitude of the nobles.—Siege of Dreux.—Battle of Ivry.—Victory of the king.—Surrender of Mantes.—Flight of the duke de Mayenne.—Entry of king Henry into the town of Mantes.

The following day, October 3rd, king Henry quitted Dieppe to give the rendezvous at Gamaches to the divisions of his army under Longueville and Aumont. The royal resolve occasioned much disapprobation. The army of the League was still only five leagues distant; and Henry's brave generals were unwilling that their king should encounter fresh peril. Repose, however, was virtual torment to king Henry. His active and wiry frame, capable of bearing the most wonderful amount of fatigue, was ever restless—ever excited. His joyous laugh and merry repartee were always most brilliant when at the head of his soldiers. No persuasions, therefore, could induce king Henry to relinquish his design. Followed by a body of two hundred horse, the king bade a temporary adieu to his faithful army. A detachment of *gardes de corps* attended his majesty; the men displaying their olive velvet banners, rent and defaced at the fight of Arques. An hour before sunset, Henry arrived within sight of Gamaches. The army in battle array awaited the king. The nobles and princes,[1] headed by the count de Soissons, dismounted from their horses, and advanced to meet his majesty. The king, as he approached, re-

[1] Amongst these were MM. de Givry, d'Humières, Armantières, d'Auchy, Palaiseau, and La Noue.—Mém. de Charles de Valois.

peatedly waved his plumed hat; while tears rolled down his cheeks as he listened to the vehement cheers of his soldiers, who were with difficulty prevented from breaking their ranks, so great was their impatience to greet their chief. Henry alighted to salute his nobles. "Messieurs! it is rather for me to receive you with open arms, —you, whose noble promptitude will now enable me to retaliate upon my enemies the damage they sought to do us! Thanks, my brave soldiers, thanks!" Until dusk, the king was occupied in making inspection of his troops; being received with acclamations as he passed from regiment to regiment—the men pressing forward to kiss his hands; while many retired proudly to repeat to their comarades the last *bon-mot* uttered by "*ce brave Béarnnois.*" At night, the count de Soissons and the duke de Longueville offered a banquet to the king. "The hall," says the count d'Auvergne, "was so full that nobody could stir. The king recounted his victory, amidst the plaudits of the company —some bewailing their misfortune in not having been present—others loudly thanking God for giving the king so mighty a rescue." At midnight the assemblage dispersed to prepare on the morrow for a review of the army; after which, Henry was to return to Dieppe, preparatory to the junction of his army of Arques with that

of the duke de Longueville at Gamaches. Many of the officers from Longueville's camp attended the king back to Dieppe; who, on his way thither, assaulted and retook the town of Eu. The most virulent edict, meanwhile, emanated from the parliament of Rouen, confiscating the property of all individuals within its jurisdiction who acknowledged le Navarrois; and annulling all mandates adverse to the obedience owing to Charles X., his lieutenant Mayenne, and La Sainte Union. At the same time, news reached the royal camp of the vast levies making in Bretagne by the duc de Mercœur for the service of the League.[1]

A design, meanwhile, of unparalleled audacity inspired king Henry. On the 21st of October,[2] the king leaving a strong garrison in Dieppe, placed himself at the head of his army, which now numbered nearly twenty-four thousand men. Vernon opened its gates, and the army crossed the Seine at Meulan, and encamped only twenty-six miles from the capital. The following day, the outposts of the royal army were at the village

[1] De Thou—Hist. de son Temps, liv. 97.

[2] On this day, Henry wrote to Madame de Guiche, to inform her of the surrender of Eu. He says: "Par la grace spéciale de Dieu je suis dans la place que j'ai sommé, et je lui dirai comme David, celui qui m'a donné victoire sur mes ennemis me rendra cette affaire facile. Ainsi soit-il, par sa grâce." MS. Bibl. Imp. Suppl. Français.

of Bagneux; and before the people of Paris placed credence in the astounding intelligence that the Béarnnois was again advancing upon them, Henry had encamped in the neighbouring villages of Mont-Rouge, Issy, Gentilly, and Vaugirard.

The duke de Mayenne, was then making his entry into Amiens, into which town he had engaged to introduce a Spanish garrison; and where he modestly declined a canopy of state prepared for him by the obsequious municipality. An immediate assault on the southern faubourgs of Paris was decided upon by Henry and his officers. The city was almost destitute of troops; and M. de Rosne, commandant of the garrison in the absence of Mayenne, had little influence over the turbulent factions. On the order of madame de Montpensier, who in fact, at this period, commanded in Paris during her brother's absence, an envoy was despatched to advertise Mayenne of the king's sudden advance. The duke sent the duke de Nemours to the aid of the Parisians; and prepared to follow in excessive consternation. The movements of le Béarnnois, however, were rapid and decisive. On All Saint's Day, twenty-four hours after Henry's arrival in the vicinity of Paris, his dispositions were made. The marshal de Biron undertook to assault the faubourgs St.

Victor and St. Marceau, with two regiments of French infantry, a Swiss battalion, and the four thousand English troops under lord Willoughby. To the marshal d'Aumont Henry committed the attack of the faubourgs St. Jacques and St. Michel, supported by six regiments, and a corps of volunteers. Henry assigned the capture of the faubourg St. Germain, which commanded the most important posts of the capital, to his faithful Châtillon and to the veteran La Noue, at the head of ten regiments, a troop of German horse, and a battalion of Swiss. Each of these divisions was reinforced by four pieces of ordnance. Henry likewise divided his cavalry into three squadrons. The king reserved for himself the principal squadron, and conferred the command of the two others on the count de Soissons and the duke de Longueville.[1] Orders were also sent to M. de Thoré Montmorency,[2] governor of Senlis, to break down the bridge over the river Oise, at St. Maxence, so as to impede the march of Mayenne to the rescue of the Parisians.

[1] Cayet—Chron. Nov. "Le dessein du roy," says Sully, "était de jetter l'alarme dans Paris, et l'insulter même ; et suivant qu'il y verrait jour de tenter de s'en rendre maître." Matthieu, Hist. du Règne de Henri IV.

[2] Guillaume de Montmorency, son of the constable Anne, and of Madeleine de Savoye Villars. The seigneur de Thoré espoused the wealthy heiress of Humières.

At daybreak, on the 1st November, the assault of the faubourgs commenced. The troops of the League at first fought with resolution; but embarrassed by a dense fog, and by the number of their assailants, they soon gave way on all sides. By half-past eight o'clock, king Henry was master of the faubourg St. Jacques. The entrenchments thrown up for the defence of the faubourgs when the capital was menaced by Henry III., were speedily carried by the veteran troops of the king; who found themselves opposed only by monks, artisans, and others—many of these individuals having been armed at the Hôtel de Ville, by the fair hands of madame la duchesse. The king's troops followed up their victory with such impetuosity, that the Parisians, pursued from the faubourgs to the gates of the city, had scarcely time to close them on their assailants. The carnage was great in the faubourg St. Germain. La Noue fiercely pursued the enemy to the Porte de Nesle. The Seine was low, and at the foot of the tower and beyond, the bed of the river was visible. Without hesitation, La Noue, and his followers, plunged into the river, and penetrated far into the city, from whence he was only recalled by the express order of the king.[1]

[1] De Thou, Cayet. Vie de Duplessis Mornay—Liques, L'Etoile, Journal de Henri IV.

The number of slain in the faubourgs amounted to eight hundred men. Henry, besides, made many prisoners, amongst whom was Bourgoing the prior of the great Dominican monastery, the accomplice of Clément in the assassination of Henry III. A hundred and fifty arquebusiers of the League also, who had sought refuge in the church of St. Germain, laid down their arms, and surrendered. So great was the dismay of the Parisians, that it is the opinion of the military commentators of the sixteenth century, that had Henry stormed the gates of the city, Paris must have fallen. Master of the suburbs of Paris, Henry unfortunately suspended the combat, with the intent of renewing the attack on the morrow. The houses and rich palaces of the faubourgs were then given up to pillage; the churches and the convents being religiously respected by all but by Henry himself, who found in the latter, according to his own words, "a more precious prize than the aggregate of the rich booty captured by his soldiers."

In the faubourg Montmartre, on the summit of the hill supposed to have been the place of the martyrdom of St. Denis, was a wealthy convent of nuns of the order of St. Benedict, founded in 1113, by Louis le Gros, and his queen Adelaide. The young abbess elect, or coadjutress, of this

convent, Marie de Beauvilliers,[1] at the commencement of the assault on the faubourgs, sent a message to the king praying for protection; and that a guard of soldiers might be placed round the convent. Her request was courteously granted by the king, who in former days had been slightly acquainted with Mademoiselle de St. Aignan, when before her profession she had been enrolled amongst queen Catherine's famous band of ladies, *l'escadron de la Royne mère*. After the assault, therefore, the king went to visit the Abbey of Montmartre. Marie de Beauvilliers was young, lovely, and weary of monastic seclusion. She was enthusiastic in her comments on king Henry's last glorious exploit; and wittily dwelt on the dismay his majesty's visit to the capital would inflict on the Paris democrats, and the confusion of their much lauded chief Mayenne, whom the youthful abbess irreverently termed "*badaud*." The king was charmed; absence had greatly lessened the influence of *la belle Corisandre*. In the society of the fascinating abbess the king forgot the days when he had so admiringly contemplated Madame de Guiche as

[1] Daughter of Claude, count de St. Aignan, and Marie Babou de la Bourdaisière. The young abbess was educated at the convent of Beaumont-les-Tours, under her aunt, Anne de Babou. She appeared for a brief interval at court; and afterwards took the white veil at Montmartre, on her nomination as coadjutress of the convent. Marie de Beauvilliers was born, April 27, 1574.

she passed along the terrace of the castle of Mont de Marsan on her way to *la prêche*, arrayed in "a bright green robe," carrying in her arms a little white dog, and followed by an English page and a footman."[1] The countess, who was the heiress of Andoins,[2] had recently made levies of several thousand Gascons at her own cost, which she sent to join the army of the king. Her faithful devotion, however, did not affect Henry so much as the fact that years had impaired the graces of the countess; who was now stout in figure, and had lost her transparency of complexion and delicate bloom, charms which once were so remarkable.[3] Henry, therefore, reluctantly quitted the abbey of Montmartre, on the clamour which arose when, at dusk hour, a detachment of the army of the League, under Nemours, was reported to have entered Paris by the porte St. Denis. The messenger sent by madame de Montpensier had implored immediate succour. Nemours, therefore, set out at the head of a squadron, passed

[1] Aubigné. Confessions Cathol. de Sancy.

[2] Diane (dite) Corisande d'Andouins, only daughter and heiress of Paul, viscount de Louvigny d'Audaux, seigneur de Lescun, and Marguerite de Canna. In 1567, Corisande espoused Philibert de Grammont, count de Guiche.

[3] "Une autre cause de dépit avec madame la comtesse étoit," says Sully, "qu'elle avait honte à cause de la laideur où elle était venue." Mademoiselle de Guise writes, that "la belle Corisande devint grasse, et rouge de visage."

hostile demonstration. The following morning, Friday, November 3rd, the king however deemed it expedient to withdraw his troops,[1] and to fall back upon Tours, where he had summoned the states during the middle of the month. The condition of the kingdom prevented Henry for the present from concentrating and retaining his forces before Paris; for the menaced invasion of the duke of Parma compelled the king to reinforce the garrisons of the places in Normandy and Picardy which adhered to the royal cause. The army withdrew, therefore, at dawn from the suburbs. Henry waited in battle array from eight until eleven to encounter the army of the League, if the duke attempted a *sortie* in pursuit. He then marched and encamped at Montlehéry. During the preceding night, a party of Huguenot cavalry[2] assailed the convent of Montmartre, and carried off its youthful abbess elect. The scandal was great, and did Henry infinite harm in the esteem of his orthodox subjects; especially when the next tidings heard of Marie de

[1] Lettre de Henri IV., à M. Duplessis Mornay, t. ii. Mémoires. In the postscript of this letter, the king says,—"En signant cette lettre j'ai eu avis que le duc de Mayenne vient d'arriver dans la ville avec son armée; de sorte que, laissant l'apparence de pouvoir forcer et la ville, et une armée tout ensemble, je suis resolu de demeurer encore demain ici pour voir quel effort fera le dit duc, et me retirer après demain à sa veue."

[2] Roger de St. Lary, duc de Bellegarde, is said to have commanded the troop which assaulted the abbey.

Beauvilliers recounted that she had thrown aside her veil, and reigned the brightest ornament of the royal household at Tours, whither she had been at once conveyed by her captors.

Henry, meanwhile, continued his triumphant progress. At the commencement of November he captured Etampes, the fortifications of which were razed. The duke de Longueville and his division there took leave of the king and returned into Picardy, to watch the movements of the Spanish viceroy, between whom and Mayenne couriers were continually passing. On the 14th of November, Henry stormed the town of Vendôme, the capital of his ducal appanage. From Vendôme, his majesty wrote to madame de Guiche in most affectionate terms. "*Mon cœur* —doubt not that I take care of myself. My trust is in God. I hope to complete the capture of Vendôme morrow; and intend to purify the environs of Tours before taking up my abode there. You cannot imagine the intrigues and feuds which are of daily occurrence. I say that the devil must be let loose! Confide always in my fidelity. Bon jour, mon amie!"[1] After receiving such assurances under the hand of his majesty, intense was the amaze and indignation of madame de Guiche when she heard of the favour bestowed on the young abbess of Montmartre; and of the

[1] MS. Bibl. de l'Arsenal, and Suppl. F. No. 1009—Bibl. Imp.

establishment of the latter at Tours! On the 20th of November, king Henry crowned this era of brilliant military exploits by making his entry by torchlight into the city of Tours.

The day following the arrival of Mayenne, in Paris, witnessed the execution of three opulent citizens,[1] accused of having distributed written bills in the streets, and especially amongst the advocates and officers of the palais de Justice, tending "to create dislike to the government of the Seize." The despatches of the envoys, meantime, whom the duke had sent to Rome, completed the perplexities of the latter. They represented Pope Sixtus as incredulous, irritable, and uncertain. One day his holiness denounced the insolent audacity of subjects who dared to take arms against their king: on another, the pope made pathetic lamentations on the desecrating taint of heresy which sullied the first Christian realm of Europe. The dean of Rheims, one of Mayenne's ambassadors, had instructions to announce the recognition of Charles X., and the departure of the duke on his campaign to destroy the heretic usurper. Sixtus smiled derisively; and asked whether his old friend M. de Nevers, still thought on the affairs of France, as he did

[1] The names of the unfortunate prisoners were, MM. Blanchet, Rafelin, and Regnaud. The president de Blancmesnil was also arrested, because several persons remarked his smiling countenance on the day king Henry stormed the faubourgs.

during the reign of the late king, while Guise was negotiating his treaty of Nemours?"[1] For the rest his holiness declared his willingness to comply with the desire of M. de Mayenne, that he should nominate a legate-extraordinary to aid the princes with his counsels; but principally to effect the liberation of the cardinal-king. So anxious was the pope that nothing should be decided without his participation, that the nomination of Enrico Gaëtano,[2] as cardinal-legate extraordinary, was on the morrow publicly announced. The cardinal was a prelate of great attainments and apparent moderation; courteous and plausible in his address, but a bigot in faith, and devoted to Spanish interests. For the more able discharge of his onerous mission, the cardinal was to be accompanied by Lorenzo Bianchetti, Filippo Sega bishop of Placentia, Moceniga bishop of Ceneda, the eloquent orator Francesco Panigarola bishop elect of Asti; and last, though not last in learning and influence, by the renowned Jesuit casuist, Bellarmino.[3] While these arrange-

[1] See Henry III., his Court and Times, vol. ii.

[2] Brother of the duke de Sermoneta and grand chamberlain to the pope.

[3] Roberto Bellarmino was born at Monte-Pulciano, in 1542. He entered the Society of Jesus at the age of 18. He soon became professor of theology at the university of Louvaine. In 1599, Bellarmino received a cardinal's hat from Clement VIII. He was made archbishop of Capua in 1601. Cardinal Bellarmino died in Rome, at the Jesuit's college, in 1621.

ments were pending, the duke de Piney arrived at Mantua, and wrote to demand audience of his holiness in the name of Henry IV. In his letter to the pope, the duke recounted at length the situation of the realm of France, and the cogent reasons which had induced the nobles to recognise king Henry. He exposed the true weakness of the League, which, he said, subsisted only by the intrigues of Spain. The duke related Mayenne's defeat at Arques, and the subsequent triumphant campaign of the king. Sixtus, therefore, modified his instructions to the cardinal-legate, and no longer insisted on the acknowledgment of the regal title of Charles X., whom he called "superannuated" in the hearing of Mayenne's envoys. His holiness, in vague terms, directed the legate to insure the election of "a Catholic king;" and to exhort the orthodox nobles to remain steadfast in their faith. The legate, however, had orders to depart without delay, notwithstanding the urgent request which the duke de Piney preferred, that he might previously confer with the pope. Sixtus, nevertheless, sent the ambassador a cordial invitation to visit the Vatican.

The royal claims of Charles X., meanwhile, were disallowed even by those who most eagerly avowed themselves his subjects The first act of Mayenne, after his return from Amiens, was

again to order proclamation of the cardinal-king. The parliament also issued an edict, commanding the nobles and officers of the realm to assemble at Meulan during the month of February, 1590, to deliberate respecting the release of king Charles. The same day, one Antoine Hotman presented a petition to the council of the Union, in the name of the imprisoned king; praying that a pension might be given him upon which he might comfortably subsist until after the restoration of peace. The president of the council, Hennequin, bishop of Rennes, uncle of madame de Ste. Beuve, rose and angrily reprimanded Hotman for making a request so derogatory to the dignity of a monarch. "Kings," said he, sententiously, "ought to command, and not to petition their subjects!" Hotman, therefore, acknowledged that he had erred in his formula of address; but prayed that his petition might be received, inasmuch as the ecclesiastical benefices of king Charles were sequestrated—some by le Béarnnois; others by command of the honourable council. An argument ensued, the conclusion of which was that the Seize rendered an official reply thus:—"That having a tremendous war to maintain, their funds would not permit them to assign a state revenue to his majesty: nevertheless, the Union would restore, as far as in its power, the benefices

of which the king had been deprived, the income from which must suffice his majesty and his household until the termination of the war."[1] During the following few weeks the affairs of the League in the city of Paris proceeded in like unsatisfactory fashion. "Where there is no lord, all the valets are lords!" bitterly observed Mayenne. At the commencement of December, don Juan de Taxis,[2] and the commendador de Morea arrived—the former to negotiate the terms upon which Philip II. was willing to afford aid to the Union. The Spanish faction mustered—bribed by the gold and promises of Mendoza. The duke de Mayenne, however, received an accession of strength by the liberation of the archbishop of Lyons, Espinac, who, at length, had managed to satisfy the cupidity of his jailor, the Gascon Du Guast.[3] This Du Guast had been trusted by Henry III. with the custody of all the prisoners arrested at Blois after the assassination of the Guises. Subsequently, he compelled his royal master, under threat of releasing all his captives, to comé to a compromise: the king therefore retained the princes de Guise in his own keeping; while Du Guast received permission to dispose as he liked of

[1] De Thou, liv. 97.

Conde de Villa Mediana. Don Juan negotiated the treaty of Joinville with the duke de Guise, in 1587.

[3] Mathieu—Hist. du Règne de Henri IV.

the archbishop of Lyons, Chapelle Marteau provost of Paris, and the sheriffs, his colleagues of the League.[1] The fiery zeal and eloquent pen of the archbishop infused new life into the party of Mayenne. The duke, in fact, was confounded, and knew not to what saint to vow himself. The insolence of Hennequin, Bussy-le-Clerc, and others of the League; the overbearing temper of madame de Montpensier; the insidious enterprizes of Mendoza; the victories of Henri Quatre, and the lamentations and discontent of his consort, madame de Mayenne, who predicted the future ruin of her children, rendered the position of the duke far from enviable. The duchess de Guise Catherine de Cleves, held a rival court in her hôtel, rue de Chaune. The numerous guests of the duchess spoke of her son, the captive of Tours, as the undoubted and legitimate head of the Union. Moreover, another witty and beautiful young princess of Lorraine had dawned upon public admiration, in the person of Louise Marguerite de Guise, daughter of the martyred duke. The Hôtel de Ville and its turbulent council, the hôtel de Mayenne, the hôtel de Montmorency the abode of madame de Montpensier, the hôtel Guise, and the house of the Spanish ambassador, were so many resorts for the factious of every political

[1] Henry III., his Court and Times, book iii.

shade. King Henry, through Villeroy, skilfully fomented this distrust by demanding a portrait of mademoiselle de Guise, hinting that when his marriage with Marguerite de Valois was dissolved, the princess might prove a suitable consort! Upon this, mademoiselle de Guise affected an enthusiastic admiration for the exploits of the king, and offered up prayers for his speedy conversion: nor could she be induced by the displeasure of her uncle Mayenne, to acknowledge the royal title of Charles X.

A great council was holden in the house of the provost of Paris Chapelle Marteau, at the commencement of December 1589, in the hope of allaying these jealousies, and of instituting a more compact and responsible government; but chiefly for the purpose of deliberating upon the proposals of the king of Spain. The personages present were the duke de Mayenne, Mendoza, don Juan de Taxis, the commendador de Morea, madame de Montpensier, the archbishop of Lyons, Bussy-le-Clerc, Hennequin, Villeroy, and the *curés* Lincestre, and Boucher. Mendoza opened the proceedings by an oration, in which he plainly stated that without the aid of his royal master, the chieftains of the League must make prompt and shameful submission to a heretic usurper. He then boldly proposed the following articles: "That his Catholic majesty should be proclaimed

protector of the kingdom of France—his majesty still acknowledging as king, monseigneur de Bourbon. That a Catholic prince should be elected as heir to the crown on the decease of Charles X., to whom his said Catholic majesty would give his eldest daughter. That the canons of Trent should be received. Foreigners were not to be nominated to offices, commands, or benefices within the realm of France—and the sale of offices abolished. His Catholic majesty upon the recognition of his protectorate engages to present the city of Paris with the sum of two millions of gold crowns, to pay the arrears of the *rentes de l'Hôtel de Ville*, accumulated to the great distress of the people of Paris from the commencement of the troubles. His majesty further promises, in conjunction with his holiness pope Sixtus, to provide men and money for the successful carrying on of the war against the heretic usurper—solely, however, on condition of the immediate proclamation of his protectorate."[1] Bussy-le-Clerc and his myrmidons of the Seize, highly lauded these articles. The turbulent *curés* declared, that propositions so full of benignity and zeal could alone have been inspired from on High. Espinac, however, rose, and in a speech of eloquent fervour, exposed the

[1] Cayet. De Thou. MSS. Archives de Simancas. Mathieu, liv. i. Mém. d'Etat de Villeroy.

true motives of Philip's insidious proposals. "We want a king orthodox and loyal to the Faith. We design not to deliver our country bound hand and foot to a foreign potentate, however magnanimous!" said the archbishop. "How, monsieur! is it by such words that you show your gratitude and the respect which you owe to Spain?" interposed Bussy, fiercely. Espinac retorted; and a violent battle of words ensued during which the choleric prelate seized and shook Bussy by the collar of his habit. Order having been at length restored, Mayenne ordered M. de Villeroy to give his opinion on the offers of the Spanish king. The clever ex-secretary, who appreciating the power and ability of Henri Quatre regarded the deliberation as a solemn farce, reiterated the advice of the archbishop of Lyons. "Monseigneur, if you give a footing in this realm to the king of Spain, you render the war immortal. You now hold the power of war or peace. You have the power of war through the devotion of this great city, and the forces of the Union; or peace, you may proclaim on the conversion of the king of Navarre! Accept, therefore, the aid—but not the protectorate of Spain." Mayenne remaining still silent, the Spanish ambassador haughtily said: "Monsieur, may God inspire you with sager counsel. I know that my master is zealous

for the cause of God. Reflect on the sublime rank and power of the Catholic king, and measure it with what you are!" No amount of objurgation, however, could induce Mayenne to commit himself by a spontaneous decision.[1] He, therefore, broke up the meeting, and promised to give his decision in the course of a few days.

The following day, the chief members of the sections held a tumultuous assembly at the Hôtel de Ville, during which it was asserted that the duke de Mayenne had no right to decide the important questions proposed by the Spanish ambassador. The Seize had invested the duke with his title of lieutenant-general of the realm; and, therefore, the supreme council of the Union had alone power to reject or accept the protectorate of his Catholic majesty. A fanatic Jesuit, named François Pigenat,[2] was deputed to convey the sentiments of the assembly to the duke de Mayenne. He was also instructed to express the extreme distrust felt by the supreme council relative to M. de Villeroy, who, formerly a devoted royalist, now tendered advice

[1] "Il voulait," says Cayet, "avoir l'opinion du président Brisson, et des principaux de la Cour; il trouva leur advis conforme à celuy du sieur de Villeroy."

[2] François Pigenat provincial of the Jesuits, and brother of Odon Pigenat, curé de St. Nicholas-des-Champs. This individual came to a disastrous end, according to Pasquier, dying at Bourges, "furieux et enragé et tombé en phrénésie."

perilous to the Union. The duke received Pigenat, listened to his address, and dismissed him with his accustomed frigidity of demeanour. Madame de Montpensier and the archbishop of Lyons remained during a considerable portion of the following few days in earnest conference with the duke. At length, the latter notified to the so-called supreme council, "that the duty and veneration he owed to his holiness, Sixtus V., rendered it impossible that he could sanction the assumption by a monarch, however orthodox, of the glorious title of protector of the Holy Roman Apostolic Faith in France; an office which solely appertained to the successor of St. Peter." This masterly response was suggested by Espinac—for a season it had the effect of silencing the factious demonstrations in favour of Philip's protectorate; especially as the legate was expected, and the agents of pope Sixtus applauded. A few hours subsequently, the duke de Mayenne, in the exercise of his supreme functions as lieutenant and viceroy of Charles X., issued an edict suppressing the famed council of the Seize; and prohibiting the meeting of any of its members for the purpose of deliberating on state affairs at the Hôtel de Ville. "The throne is no longer vacant," argued Mayenne: "the forms of monarchical government demand that the council of

the sovereign, or of his representative, should be select, responsible, obedient, and its members nominated by a direct exercise of regal authority." The duke then appointed Espinac archbishop of Lyons, lord-keeper of the great seal of the Union; and dismissed from that office, Pierre Sesnault, a demagogue whose tyranny every member even of the turbulent Seize[1] deprecated. Four secretaries of state were nominated, MM. de Bray, Pericard secretary to the deceased duke de Guise, Rossieux, and Desportes-Baudoin. All state documents were to be signed by the duke alone, thus: *De par le Roy, présent monseigneur le duc de Mayenne, lieutenant-général de l'Etat et Couronne de France.*[2] A decree was moreover appended, convoking the states-general to meet at Meulan after Candlemas Day, 1590.

The consternation and fury of the Seize at this bold defiance were excessive; and yet the decision of Mayenne was prompted by the rigid application of their own decrees. During the reign of Henry III., an interregnum was proclaimed; on the great seal, the effigy of the monarch had been effaced, and a vacant throne substituted. The Seize, therefore, legislated; and their lieutenant

[1] The council termed "des Seize," from the sixteen wards of the city of Paris. It consisted of forty members.

[2] De Thou—liv. 79. Mathieu, Dupleix, Mém. de la Ligue, Villeroy, and numberless other authorities.

sanctioned and executed their edicts. A king, however, had now been proclaimed and acknowledged. The government, therefore, had reverted to its ancient channels—the king, then represented by Mayenne, the privy council, and the council of state, whose acts were promulgated after registration by the parliament of Paris.

In Venice, meanwhile, the victories of Henry IV. produced the most propitious result. The senate met to deliberate whether, in deference to the demands of the pope, the king of Spain, and the emperor Maximilian, made through the respective ambassadors of these potentates, the claims of the king of Navarre should be rejected, and the cardinal-king acknowledged. The debates of the seignory were generally practical and disimpassioned. The military repute of king Henry, his successes, the plots and cabals of the League, and the friendship of the queen of England, and above all, Henry's recognition by the great nobles of the realm, convinced the senators that the royal cause ultimately would triumph. Accordingly, with sagacious decision, the doge Pasquale Cicogna wrote to king Henry, giving him the title of "Christian Majesty," which letter he delivered to the French ambassador Hurault. Instructions were next forwarded to Mocenigo, the Venetian ambassador in France, to present himself before his majesty

and compliment him on his accession in the name of the serene republic. The nuncio[1] upon this was so incensed that he immediately retired from Venice; but the pope, who had wished to intimidate the senate, and not to break with the republic, refused to see the prelate on his arrival in Rome, and sent him word to return to Venice in the same haste as he had quitted that city. The grand-duke of Tuscany,[2] also, renewed secretly to Henry IV. the offers which he had made to the deceased king; to whom he promised the sum of 2,000,000 of gold crowns, on the security of the revenues of the city of Marseilles. Duke Ferdinand held conference on the prospects of the king with Jacques Auguste de Thou the famous historian, who was in Italy; having been sent by Henry III. on a diplomatic mission to the minor states. The duke promised to frustrate, if possible, the signature of a treaty which Philip II. was anxious to conclude with the Swiss cantons: he also engaged to send the cavaliere Guicciardini into Germany, with the sum requisite for new levies of *reiters* for the service of the king; while the sole return which he asked from his majesty was, that a marriage

[1] The pope's nuncio in Venice was Geronimo Mateucci.

[2] Ferdinand I., grand duke of Tuscany, succeeded Francesco I., 1589. Before his accession, Ferdinand obtained great repute as cardinal de Medici. He espoused Christine, eldest daughter of the duke de Lorraine.

might be negotiated between his niece Marie de Medici and Henri de Bourbon prince de Dombes.[1] The duke promised his niece a dowry of 300,000 gold crowns; which sum his majesty might, he said, use, upon assigning one of his towns in Gascony as security for the future payment of the money to the husband of the young princess.[2]

The duke of Mantua,[3] likewise, sent the king most obliging assurances; and prayed his majesty's *bienveillance* for his uncle the duke de Nevers, whose tender conscience on religious matters had induced him to retire to his castle of Nevers, and observe a strict neutrality during the pending contest. These satisfactory communications greeted Henry IV. on his arrival at Tours. The king was there received by the cardinals de Vendôme and de Lenoncourt, and by the secretaries Beaulieu and Revol. The city was illuminated; and the people hailed their gallant monarch with transport. On the following day, the king re-

[1] Henri de Bourbon Montpensier, only son of the duke de Montpensier, and Renée d'Anjou; a young prince, wise and valiant, pious and honourable. Henry IV. wished to give his sister Catherine to the prince de Dombes.

[2] De Thou. Vie de Henri de Bourbon Montpensier.

[3] Vicenzo Gonzaga, duke de Mantua. He first married Marguerite Farnese, only daughter of the renowned Alexandro, duke of Parma, whom he repudiated. For his second wife, the duke took Eleanore de Medici, daughter of Francesco I., duke of Tuscany, and the archduchess Giovanna of Austria.

paired to the hall in which the parliament met ;[1] and where a throne and canopy had been erected. The king took his seat on the dais, and addressed the assemblage. In a few well-chosen sentences, his majesty expressed his regret that the disturbed condition of the realm must postpone the meeting of the states ; though, having convened that august assembly for the present season, he had repaired to Tours, being always desirous to keep his word. The king modestly alluded to his late glorious exploits ; and stated, that he was still minded to examine again into the difference between his own faith and that of the majority of his subjects. The president de Harlay replied to the royal address, and assured the king of the loyalty of his nobles, and of the majority of the people of France. The king then congratulated de Harlay[2] on his liberation from the Bastille, and return to his faithful parliament. The Venetian ambassador was next introduced. Mocenigo presented a missive from the Seignory ; and announced that the republic acknowledged his majesty's royal title, and prayed for his speedy victory over his enemies. Henry graciously thanked the ambassador ; and desired him to

[1] In the monastery of St. Julian.

[2] The president de Harlay was imprisoned by the Parisian demagogues after their bold arrest of certain members of the High Court by Bussy-le-Clerc, during the troubles of January, 1589. See Henry III., his Court and Times.

transmit to the Venetian senate his acknowledgments, and to state, "he should always remember that the republic was the first Roman Catholic power which had sent him an ambassador." During the remainder of the day Henry granted audiences, and dined in public. In the evening the king received the ladies of Tours. Madame de Beauvilliers was present; with whom Henry discoursed apart for so long an interval as to give umbrage to several of the ladies present. Next to the king, the duke de Bellegarde attracted most favourable attention from the fair dames, as he excelled in courtly grace and accomplishments. Bellegarde's handsome person and frank and joyous carriage had elevated him to conspicuous favour with the late king, in whose household he held the office of first gentleman of the chamber. Henry III., on his death-bed, especially recommended Bellegarde to the notice of his successor; and the duke, therefore, continued to hold the same office about the person of Henry IV. The duke, at this period, declared himself the cavalier of Gabrielle d'Estrées, the beautiful daughter of Antoine marquis de Cœuvres, and the cousin-german of madame de Beauvilliers. Many of the noblest damsels of France envied Gabrielle d'Estrées her conquest; and wondered how the witty and handsome duke had fallen captive to the charms of a

lady who had not as yet made her *début* at court; and was, therefore, considered as comparatively obscure.

The king on the following day held a council on financial matters. Arrears of pay were owing to the Swiss mercenaries, and many desertions had consequently ensued. Henry, therefore, in this emergency, resolved to apply to the duke de Nevers[1] for a loan of 33,000 gold crowns: his majesty having been assured of the loyalty of the duke, whose religious scruples, it was said, alone sheathed his sword. He also wrote to queen Elizabeth, and to various Protestant powers, for pecuniary aid to carry on the war. The king, moreover, sanctioned several proposals made by the cardinal de Vendôme for the more punctual transaction of public business; especially as Henry commanded that the secretary Beaulieu should attend him to the camp, to prepare and despatch any requisite manifestoes. The great seal was also entrusted, temporarily, to Beaulieu. On the decease of Henry III., Montholon resigned his office of lordkeeper, being painfully conscious of his incapacity to contend with the difficulties of that

[1] Louis de Gonzaga, uncle of the reigning duke of Mantua. The duke bore the title of Nevers in right of his consort Henriette de Cleves duchesse de Nevers, one of the three coheiresses of Charles de Cleves duke de Nevers, and of Marguerite de Bourbon Vendôme, aunt of the king.

position.[1] The cardinal de Vendôme, since Henry's accession, had therefore signed and sealed all edicts, in addition to his charge of president of the council of state. Henry, likewise, commanded that the trial of Etienne Bourgoing, prior of the Dominicans of Paris, should be proceeded with, and the sentence of the judges executed. His majesty, moreover, desired the duke de Bellegarde to escort Marie de Beauvilliers to Senlis; where the latter would find seclusion, and a sure refuge during the pending campaign.

During the sojourn of Henry at Tours, Charles baron de Biron and M. de Châtillon laid siege to the town of Le Mans, which was defended by Bois-Dauphin, an ardent Leaguer; one of the heroes of the barricades of Paris, and who had just been created a marshal by M. de Mayenne. On the 25th day of November, Henry, thirsting for fresh conquest, quitted Tours, after a residence there of two days, and repaired to the camp before Le Mans. A vigorous assault followed the arrival of the king, and the town surrendered on Friday the 1st day of December. The capture of Le Mans was followed by that of the town and citadel of Alençon. From the latter place the king proceeded to

[1] Montholon also was afraid of being called upon to seal edicts in favour of the Huguenots. On his retirement. Montholon counselled the recall of the chancellor Cheverny.

Laval, to receive the homage of the loyal nobles of southern Bretagne, and to confer with his lieutenant, the prince de Dombes. Henry returned to Alençon on the 23rd of December, where he spent the festival of Christmas. The pleasaunce of the castle of Alençon had been planned by Henry's accomplished grandmother, Marguerite d'Angoulême; and its gardens[1] modelled on those of the royal château of Fontainebleau, were celebrated throughout Normandy. From Alençon the king departed at the commencement of January, 1590, and invested Falaise. The count de Brissac[2] held the place for the League; but notwithstanding the brave and well-organized defence of the besieged, the town fell before the royal assaults, and capitulated about the middle of the month. Brissac, having stipulated for life and liberty, was suffered to retire unmolested; but the town was abandoned to pillage. The king presented the marshal de Biron with all the rich booty found in the castle of Falaise.[3]

[1] Life of Marguerite d'Angoulême, queen of Navarre, vol. ii.

[2] Charles de Cossé count de Brissac, after marshal and first duke de Brissac, was the son of Charles, marshal de Brissac, and Charlotte d'Esquetot.

[3] The king wrote from Falaise to madame de Guiche; in which letter he says, "Je n'aime rien que vous; et en cette résolution je mourray, si ne me donnez occasion de changer. Adieu, mon cœur!" Bibl. Imp. M.S. Suppl. F. 2289.

Henry, then pursuing his victorious march, invested Lisieux, which, after a defence of a day, opened its gates and submitted; as did also the adjacent towns of Pont l'Evêque and Bayeux. Honfleur was the only neighbouring fortified place which remained to be reduced: and on its submission the king would find himself master of the largest and most important portion of Normandy. The garrison was commanded by the brother of the brave Crillon, who had adopted the cause of the League. During the siege a soldier of the garrison took oath to kill the king. To fulfil his vow this man quitted the castle, and in the intent of surprising his majesty as he made his daily rounds in the camp, posted himself behind a hedge. An officer presently passed the place of ambuscade; when the assassin, believing that he beheld the king, shot him dead with an arquebuse, and succeeded in making his escape into Honfleur. The rumour immediately spread that the king was dead; and the garrison appeared and vehemently cheered on the ramparts of the castle. Henry, however, promptly showed himself; and the well-known helmet and white plume apprized the enemy that their perfidious attempt had failed.[1] The siege operations were thenceforth carried on with redoubled animosity; but Crillon, a few days

[1] De Thou, liv 97.

subsequently, was compelled to capitulate. Henry's triumphant career in Normandy was arrested by intelligence of the capitulation of Pontoise to Mayenne, who had next proceeded to lay siege to the important town of Meulan. The king resolved to relieve Meulan, or to offer battle to the army of the League. Such was the extraordinary energy and vigour displayed by Henry at this important crisis, that the royal army appeared before Meulan on the 13th day of February. Mayenne immediately raised the siege and encamped on the opposite side of the river. The king therefore entered Meulan,[1] attended by the count de Soissons, the marshal de Biron, and Maximilian de Béthune, baron de Rosny. The inhabitants, who had bravely stood a siege of several weeks, greeted their king with rapturous plaudits. Henry, after traversing the town and greatly lauding the brave defence of the citizens, retired to his camp. The following day, Mayenne again attacked the city from the south, and succeeded in making a breach in the wall. The people however, bravely stood to arms and repulsed their assailants. The king immediately marched

[1] As the king ascended the steeple of the church of St. Nicaise, a cannon ball passed between his legs. Mathieu, t. ii. p. 24. "Mes faits sont des miracles!" wrote Henry to madame de Guiche, "aussi sont-ils conduits du Grand Maître." Bibl. Imp. Suppl. F. 1009.

to the rescue. He threw fresh provision into the town, reinforced the garrison, and then, in order to draw away the army of the League, laid siege to the strong town of Dreux.

Whilst the duke de Mayenne was besieging Pontoise, the legate-extraordinary Gaëtano entered Paris. He was received in the faubourg St. Jacques by the chiefs of the Union then in Paris, and by ten thousand burgesses in gala attire. The Swiss troops who were to fire the salute, not having their matches lighted when the cortége appeared, sent to request his eminence to make a short delay. The cardinal, however, who had heard of the want of skill shown by many of the men in handling their fire-arms at the attack on the faubourgs, requested that the salute might be dispensed with. "The cardinal feared that some unskilful hand, or some wicked partisan of the king, might salute him with a brace of bullets," writes an eye-witness of the scene. The soldiers, however, could not be induced to omit this honour to the representative of his holiness. During the time, therefore, that the cardinal was bestowing his benediction, pieces of ordnance and arquebuses were being discharged, to his manifest annoyance.[1] Chapelle

[1] Le Grain—Décade de Henri le Grand. Du Breuil, Antiquités de Paris. L'Etoile, Journal de Henri IV. L'ordre et la magnificence faite à la réception du légat par messieurs de

Marteau pronounced an harangue of welcome, to which the cardinal shortly replied. The addresses were so tedious, as each faction and all the corporate bodies of the capital presented an harangue, that Gaëtano retired completely exhausted to the episcopal palace. There the cardinal was received by Gondy cardinal-bishop of Paris, by the Spanish ambassador, and by madame de Montpensier. The address of the cardinal, meanwhile, had given great umbrage to the party of Les Politiques, amongst whom were numbered Villeroy, Jeannin, L'Huillier, and the presidents Brisson and Blancsmenil. His eminence stated: "That following the example of his predecessors, his holiness had been pleased, by the advice of the Sacred College, to nominate a legate in France, so that by the aid of Almighty God he might tear up and destroy heresy; and build and confirm, as he in his wisdom, aided by the prayers of all pious catholics, should deem most conducive to the glory of God and to the establishment of an orthodox dynasty over the realm of St. Louis the canonized king." The same evening, therefore, Villeroy waited upon the archbishop of Lyons chancellor of the

Paris.—Paris, 1590. The famous pope Boniface VIII. was the ancestor of the legate, being the grandson of Mathias Gaëtano (or Cajetan), general of Manfred, king of Sicily. The Gaëtani were of Spanish origin, and established themselves in Naples about the year 1200.

League, and declined to take the oaths as a member of the council under Mayenne; as no mention had been made by the cardinal-legate of his eminence's intention to communicate with Le Navarrois on the matter of his conversion. Gondy cardinal-bishop of Paris also retired from the capital, as he deemed the language of the legate "unsatisfactory, and tending alone to gratify the Spanish faction." The following day the legate sent his credentials and a missive from his holiness to the parliament; all which documents were registered by acclamation. On the 15th of January, Gaëtano went in state to La Chambre Dorée. The legate demeaned himself arrogantly, and spoke as if he alone had the disposal of the crown. His eminence never mentioned Charles X., and scarcely condescended to notice the duchesses de Nemours and de Mayenne—his courtesies being reserved for the members of the discomfited ex-council of the Seize, Mendoza, and madame de Montpensier. All the officers of the parliament of Paris were present to receive the legate. Gaëtano advanced, arrayed in full pontificals, towards the throne, which stood under a canopy, and was actually preparing to ascend the steps of the dais, when the first president de Brisson dexterously seized the hand of his eminence, and under pretext of doing him honour, led him to the chair prepared

for his use. A frown gathered on the brow of the haughty prelate: he, nevertheless, dissimulated, and commenced an oration in the Latin tongue upon the august majesty of the popedom; and stated that his holiness relied on the holy zeal displayed by the French people for the regeneration of France.[1]

As soon as the arrival of the prelate in Paris was ascertained, the parliament of Tours issued a decree declaring all persons guilty of treason who held correspondence with Gaëtano, cardinal archbishop of Capua, until such time as his eminence should see fit to present his credentials to his majesty, and swear to observe the liberties of the Gallican churches.[2] The legate responded by publishing circular letters, forbidding any prelate to hold communication with Henri de Bourbon, or to approach the city of Tours; and declaring all infringers of this mandate "contumacious, and deposed from their dignities and benefices." The sensation created by these mutual defiances had scarcely died away when the news reached Paris of the relief of Meulan[3] by Le Navarrois, and of the siege of the

[1] Régistres du Parlement de Paris, et de l'Hôtel de Ville. Mém. de la Ligue. Le pouvoir et commission du cardinal Cajetan (Gaëtano) légat en France—Paris, 1590.

[2] De Thou, liv. 97.

[3] The relief of Meulan was decided upon by king Henry, at the solicitation of M. de Rosny, the future duke de Sully.

stronghold of Dreux. The Te Deum had yet to be sung in honour of the capture of Pontoise—a ceremony deferred in order that it might be graced by the presence of the legate. The most stringent methods were adopted by the duke de Nemours governor of Paris, to preserve the public peace. The faction of the city sections raved, and frantically invoked the aid of Spain. The government of Mayenne was decried, and the hotel of the duchesse de Guise thronged by the partisans of Philip II., who pretended to see no hope for France excepting by the marriage of her son, the captive duke de Guise, with the Infanta doña Isabel. Mendoza was heard to give the duchess the title of *la reine mère!* Mademoiselle de Guise, who still nourished the hope of an alliance with Henri IV., laughed, and exclaimed complacently, *"Oui! vous voulez dire mère de la reine regnante!"*

The failure of all the military operations of the Union, added to the public discontent, at length compelled the Spanish ambassador to write to his royal master, that notwithstanding the ungracious rejection of his offered protectorate by Mayenne and the League, aid in money

Henry wrote the following characteristic note to Rosny, on deciding upon this important operation; "M. de Rosny, par votre importunité je m'achemine au secour de Meulan, mais s'il m'en arrive inconvénient, je vous le reprocherai à jamais! Henry."—Recueil de Lettres Missives de Henri IV. t. iii.

and reinforcements must be afforded, or Le Navarrois would soon enter Paris. Mayenne, also, sent pressing entreaty to the Spanish viceroy Farnese for help. He stated that a second battle was imminent; and that the prosperity of La Sainte Union depended on the successful issue of the conflict. He offered to repair to Brussels to confer with the viceroy, from whom he demanded only a regiment of cavalry, and 500 infantry. To rouse a spirit of emulation in the breast of Philip II., Mayenne enlarged on the liberal succour sent by queen Elizabeth to Le Béarnois. The mind of Philip II. was agitated by many misgivings at this season. His veneration for monarchical tradition, and for the principle of legitimacy, warred with his bigotry, and his intense and absorbing desire to promote the aggrandizement of his daughter, doña Isabel, "the light and joy of his eyes!" But for the Salique laws, the infanta, doubtless, was the legitimate heiress of Henry III. Doña Isabel was niece of the deceased king; while the king of Navarre stood in the relation of second cousin to Henry III., although the brother-in-law of the latter, by his marriage with Marguerite de Valois. The fanaticism of Philip II. prevailed: his legion of prelates, priests, and monks, declared the war in France a sixth crusade—a

holy work in which the deceased emperor Charles V. would have gloried—an opportunity vouchsafed to the Spanish nation in compensation for the failure of the great Armada, which the Catholic king might not deny to his people. The order, therefore, was despatched from Madrid authorizing the departure of the young count Egmont, at the head of the succours demanded by the duke de Mayenne; who was to join the latter in his military operations for the relief of Dreux. Philip II. simultaneously issued a Declaration to explain and excuse the invasion of France by Spanish troops. "We require and adjure," wrote his Catholic majesty, "the aid of all Christian princes to unite with us to procure the liberation of the very Christian king Charles X., a captive in the power of heretics; also that by such alliance the very august realm of France may be purged from heresy. By the grace of God, we will then proceed to the extirpation of other heretic princes; so that finally united Christendom, under our banners, may recover the Holy Land from the unhallowed infidel." In Paris, to give more imposing weight to the decision taken by the Spanish cabinet to engage actively in the contest, another astounding scene of folly and profanity, called a religious procession, was organized under the immediate auspices of the cardinal-legate. The chief per-

sonages present, and who walked bare-footed through the streets of Paris, were the legate Gaëtano, the archbishop of Lyons; the bishops of Rennes, Fréjus, Senlis, Placentia, Cenada, Asti, and Glasgow;[1] the ambassador Mendoza; the duke de Nemours, the chevalier d'Aumale, the members of the parliament of Paris, the Chambre des Comptes; the provost Chapelle Marteau, the colonels and captains of the city bands, which included the most prominent members of the Seize. The route of the procession was from the Palais to the church of the Augustinians, quai des Augustins. The sermon was preached by one Chrestien Florat, a noted orator of the League, who interspersed his discourse with profane jests and fanatic demonstrations. When mass concluded, the cardinal-legate robed in full pontificals, and surrounded by his attendant priests, took his seat on a throne placed on one side of the high altar, the book of the Holy Gospels being supported before him by two kneeling acolytes. One by one, the personages present approached, and on their knees took oath to maintain the Holy Catholic Faith; to defend the city of Paris; and to bear true allegiance to the Holy League, to king Charles X., and

[1] Robert Beaton, archbishop of Glasgow, who had originally repaired to Paris to solicit the interposition of Henry III., to save the life of Mary Stuart.

to the duke de Mayenne as his majesty's lieutenant-general. The same day proclamation was made in the streets of the beneficent intents of king Philip. Copies of the Declaration of the causes which moved his Catholic majesty to "take pity on the woes of France" and of a private letter stating the same, and addressed by Philip to the archbishop of Toledo, Gaspardo de Quiroga, were sold publicly. About this time also, an attempt was made through the duchesse de Retz, to corrupt the loyal fidelity of M. d'Aubigné, to whom the custody of Charles X. had been committed. The duchess was empowered to offer Aubigné the sum of 200,000 crowns; or the perpetual government of Belle-Isle, with 50,000 crowns to be paid before the liberation of the old prelate. The indignation of the valiant d'Aubigné, was intense; he ignominiously dismissed the agent sent by madame de Retz; and despatched a courier to inform king Henry, who was besieging Dreux, of the intrigue afloat.[1] The liberation of the old cardinal, however, would now have proved of little benefit to the League. Worn by suspense, and racked by an agonizing malady, the cardinal had fallen into a condition of despondency, verging upon imbecility. He rarely left his bed; and passed his waking hours in tearful lamen-

[1] Vie d'Aubigné.

tations and reminiscences, in which his old friend and patroness, queen Catherine de Medici, chiefly figured. These reveries sometimes continued for a considerable interval, during which the cardinal carried on imaginary conversations with the queen; and when again roused to consciousness, a pitiable burst of grief convulsed the helpless captive.

Succours, meanwhile, poured into the royal camp. Henry was joined by the young count d'Auvergne, and a body of cavalry. M. de Givry brought a battalion of infantry from the army of Champagne. The duke de Mayenne, however, involved in almost insurmountable difficulties by the tardiness, or insubordination of his allies, found himself compelled to make a hasty journey to Brussels, to implore that Egmont might be forthwith despatched with reinforcements. The king during intervals in the siege of Dreux, amused himself, in his own characteristic manner, by paying *devoirs* to the young *châtelaine* of Nonancourt, the marquise de Guercheville et de la Rocheguyon. Antoinette de Pons had been a widow three years,[1] when she attracted the notice of Henri Quatre. She first saw the king in Normandy, after the siege of Falaise,

[1] The marchioness was the daughter of Antoine, sire de Pons, count de Marennes, and of Marie de Montchenu, heiress of Guercheville. She was the widow of Henri de Silly, count de la Rocheguyon, who died in 1586.

when, as in the case of madame de Beauvilliers, she sent to ask royal protection for her dower castle and lands in that province. The marchioness who was heiress of the house of Guercheville, at the period when Henry besieged Dreux, resided in her own castle of Nonancourt. Henry pursued his suit with great ardour; and went even so far, it is said, as to promise to espouse the marchioness, when his ill-omened marriage with queen Marguerite should be dissolved. Madame de Guercheville, however, being a woman of honour and virtue, steadily repulsed Henry's suit; and derided the supposition that, under any circumstances, a private gentlewoman might aspire to the exalted rank of queen consort. "Sire, you have before given that same promise, report says, to madame de Guiche, and to mademoiselle de Guise—though this latter princess, indeed, might aspire to your legitimate alliance." The resistance of the marchioness only augmented the king's passion. He treated the marquise, nevertheless, with gallant respect; and not only gave her a guard of soldiers to defend the château of Nonancourt, but promised to escort her in safety to Tours, and to protect her lands in Normandy. The star of the fair Gabrielle d'Estrées had not yet risen, or madame de Guercheville might have beheld that event about to be realized which she then deemed

impossible—the elevation of a private gentlewoman to the throne of the *fleurs-de-lis*.

The urgency of military affairs, at length compelled king Henry to suspend his suit to Antoinette de Pons, and concentrate his attention on the proceedings of the duke de Mayenne. Throughout the country, successes had crowned the valiant arms of Henry's adherents. All Guyenne pronounced for Henry IV. The provinces of the Loire, with their loyal population and picturesque towns, every castle and street in which treasured its legends of royal occupants and stately pageants, acknowledged the king. The county of the Blaisois was also loyal. Montmorency in Languedoc, abjured the League and its *canaille;* but yet the first Christian baron of France did not heartily espouse the cause of a heretic monarch. Epernon,[1] jealous, suspicious, and arrogant, swayed the district of the Angoumois, nominally in support of the royal cause. The duke desired to behold the sovereign his suppliant, and to ruin M. d'O, his mortal enemy, whom the king had recently admitted into his council. The duke also wished to supplant the marshals de Biron and d'Aumont, in whom his majesty placed un-

[1] The duke d'Epernon died in 1642, aged 88; "le plus ancien officier de la couronne, le plus ancien général d'armée, le plus ancien gouverneur de province, le plus ancien chevalier de l'Ordre, le plus ancien conseiller d'état, et presque le plus ancien homme de condition de son temps."—Giraud, Vie du duc d'Epernon.

limited confidence; and to find no rival at the council table in Maximilian de Béthune baron de Rosny, whose honest and sagacious counsel Henry began, at this period, highly to esteem. Epernon, moreover, appreciated the power of his great wealth; while he remembered, in gloomy displeasure, the vivid admiration betrayed by Henry, on more than one occasion, for his young and spirited consort, Catherine de Foix Candale. The duke de Nevers Louis de Gonzague, while he revered Henry's royal claims, believed them invalidated by his heresy and the papal interdict. In the Nivernois, the duke, therefore, maintained the same attitude as Montmorency in the south. But if Nevers refused to serve king Henry, he scupulously refrained from affording aid or countenance to his majesty's enemies. The marshal de Matignon in Bordeaux, acted on the same system. All these nobles, therefore, while they united in repressing the League, took no active steps to secure the royal supremacy. Provence, meanwhile, was invaded by the duke de Savoye and torn by private feuds and factions. Normandy, Henry's trusty sword had won. Bretagne, the county of Nantes excepted, was a very bulwark of treason and revolt. The duke de Mercœur fought for the League; and then combated the Union in support of the alleged rights of his wife, Marie de Penthièvre, to the duchy of Bretagne.

Mercœur maintained strict alliance with Spain; and the ports of the duchy harboured a Spanish flotilla, much to the annoyance of the English council. Queen Elizabeth afterwards, made the diligent prosecution of the war in Bretagne and in the other maritime provinces opposite to the English coast, one of the conditions of her treaty, offensive and defensive with Henri Quatre. The duke de Lorraine, meantime, had greatly abated in ardour for the success of the League. His son, the duke de Bar, returned highly dissatisfied from the campaign in Normandy. Rivalled by Mayenne in the councils of the League, the young prince had further the mortification to know that Philip II. deemed the captive duke de Guise a more eligible husband for the infanta than himself; although the eldest son of the second sister of the deceased king. Henry IV., however, in his fortresses of Tours and Fontenay, held both his rivals in durance.

On the 10th day of March the duke de Mayenne returned to his camp, and, joined by the Spanish and Walloon regiments under Egmont, marched to the succour of Dreux. The town had sustained a tremendous cannonade of five days; and the garrison was on the eve of surrender when Mayenne arrived. King Henry boldly determined to offer immediate battle to the enemy; and withdrawing his army from

before Dreux, he encamped at St. André, a a village between Nonancourt and Ivry. The utmost ardour for the conflict prevailed amongst the royal troops. Henry and his officers, fully alive to the momentous import of the conflict, held almost ceaseless counsel, and adopted every precaution which diligent foresight could suggest. The royal army was commanded by valiant officers—men inured to the vicissitudes of the battle-field, and whose courage had been kindled and sustained by brilliant victories. The marshals de Biron and d'Aumont, to whose military science Henry owed so vast a debt, acted as lieutenants to their royal master. The *prestige* of the royal army was, moreover, enhanced by the presence of Montpensier, of Charles de Biron son of the marshal de Biron, of Conty, Soissons, de la Tremouille, Duplessis-Mornay, Givry, de Guiche, the counts d'Auvergne and de St. Paul, M.M. d'Humières, and Mouay de St. Phale. The gallant Turenne alone was prevented by a gun-shot wound, which obliged him to remain in Béarn, from doing brave service at this critical period. In Picardy, the duke de Longueville and La Noue gathered their troops to reinforce the royal army in case of need. Henry, meanwhile, with his own hand, drew out the plan of battle, which, on the evening of the 12th, he submitted to Biron, Aumont, and Montpensier. It was unanimously approved and adopted; and

by the king's orders, Charles de Biron assembled the chief officers of the army, and communicated his majesty's design. The king afterwards commanded that public prayers should be recited by his ministers, both reformed and orthodox. He next pronounced an harangue, which was interrupted by vociferous plaudits. The king then, kneeling, solemnly committed his army, his cause, and his people, to the care of the Lord God of Battles.

The following morning Henry drew up his army in battle array. He divided his cavalry into seven squadrons, and each division he supported by a battalion of infantry. The command of his two first divisions, Henry gave to Aumont and to the duke de Montpensier. The third division, —which consisted of light-horse and artillery, under the count d'Auvergne—the king posted in advance of the two first-mentioned squadrons. The fourth squadron was commanded by the baron de Biron. The king led the fifth and largest division, numbering six hundred horse, to which was attached the squadrons respectively commanded by Conti, de la Tremouille, and Duplessis-Mornay. The sixth corps, under the marshal de Biron, consisting of three hundred and fifty horse and two French regiments, Henry kept in reserve to reinforce any division hotly pressed on the field. The seventh division was

formed by the German reiters under their commandant, Schomberg.

The duke de Mayenne advanced timidly, and with manifest foreboding, to risk his reputation and the fortunes of the League upon the chances of a second pitched battle with Le Navarrois. The outcry in Paris, however, and the rapid successes of the king left him no alternative. The victory at Arques had demonstrated Henry's prowess in the field; and, though numerically superior, the fresh levies of the Union could ill withstand, it was feared, the shock of the king's disciplined battalions. The duke posted his army near to the village of Ivry. The right and the left wing of the army was composed of Swiss battalions and French regiments, under MM. de Belin, Pheffer, St. Paul, Tremblecourt, and Thenissay. The command of the centre was shared by Mayenne, by his half-brother the duke de Nemours, and by the chevalier d'Aumale. On the right of the duke and his staff was Egmont with four hundred Flemish horse and a squadron of Spanish cavalry; on his left, a regiment of horse, three hundred strong, under M. de Terrail, in the midst of which the banner of the League[1] was borne by an officer. The duke posted his German levies on a hill to the left.

[1] The banner of the League was white, beset with black fleurs-de-lis.

These regiments were flanked on the left by cavalry under Fontaine-Martel; and on the right, by a squadron of two hundred Spanish lancers. By the time these dispositions were made, the sun had set; the troops, therefore, remained under arms the greater part of the night, as it was decided to defer the combat until the morrow. The king took a brief repose in the open air on a mattress; the rest of the night, accompanied by the marshals de Biron and d'Aumont, he reconnoitred the camp of the enemy. At dawn all was activity in the royal camp; the spirit of the soldiers was further raised by the arrival of reinforcements under M. de Chattes, governor of Dieppe, and MM. de Fervaques,[1] and de Larchant. Henry again carefully reviewed his army. Surrounded by a brilliant staff, the king went from rank to rank, everywhere received with acclamations. The marshal de Biron rode on his majesty's right; Duplessis-Mornay, the grand Prior, Mouay de St. Phale, Givry, Rosny, and the duke de Montpensier followed; all burning to demonstrate their zeal against the rebel subjects, who had sought the aid and the sword of Spain. The

[1] The king had previously summoned Fervaques from Normandy by the following note; "Fervaques! à cheval! car je veux voir à ce coup-cy, de quel poil sont les oisons de Normandie. Venés droit à Alençon! Henry."—Recueil de Lettres Missives de Henri IV. t. iii. p. 61.

helmet of the king was surmounted by a towering white plume, and his majesty wore a suit of fine chain armour. "The soldiers of the royal army," writes De Thou, "were armed to the teeth; they displayed neither scarf nor decoration, but their accoutrements inspired grim terror. The army of the duke de Mayenne, on the contrary, was magnificent in equipment. The officers wore bright-coloured scarfs, while gold glittered upon their helmets and lances." Henry reined in his charger beneath the white banner of France, and again harangued his troops. He expatiated on the crime of the rebels, in having concluded league offensive and defensive with Spain. 'They take as their pretext and excuse, a design to exterminate heresy; but, Messieurs, have we not seen them arm against their late Catholic and orthodox monarch, and cut short the thread of his life by the most execrable of parricides? It is to avenge this enormous crime that we are now to fight. Upon the fortune of this day your lives, your honour, and your estates depend. You are about to contend, not with Frenchmen, but with Spaniards. To your loyal valour I commit my crown. If, as you all assert, you have hitherto had cause to love and to venerate my kingly rule, by the grace of God Almighty today you shall see that I can lead you all—mighty

in arms as you have shown yourselves—along the path of honour to victory!" When the king ended his oration a mighty shout rent the air. Again invoking the name of the God of Battles, Henry gave the signal for the onslaught, which opened by a general discharge of artillery upon the German troops of Mayenne's army.[1] The reiters, under Bassompierre, returned the cannonade; but, instantly retreating in confusion, they bore down upon the centre of the army of the League, which Mayenne commanded in person. The duke, without hesitation, charged the fugitives; upon which they fled from the field in panic and disarray. This incident gave the king a manifest advantage. The viscount de Tavannes then attacked the royalists at the head of several regiments of horse, and was repulsed by d'Aumont, who, reinforced by the king, effectually drove back the foe. "The king," wrote the marshal de Biron, "then performed a prodigious act of valour. With a detachment of cavalry, he hastened to the support of M. le maréchal d'Aumont, who, attacked by seven regiments of horse, without such aid must have given way before the enemy." The duke de Mayenne, thereupon, ordered a general attack; and ad-

[1] "Sauvez les Français, et main basse sur l'étranger!" exclaimed the king.—Péréfixe. The action was fought on the site of the existing villages of St. André and Foucrainville.

vanced himself to assault the centre of the royal enemy, followed by the *élite* of his own forces, and by a regiment of Spanish carabiniers. He was supported by the duke de Nemours and the chevalier d'Aumale, at the head of their respective divisions. The shock was rude. The king led his troops, his majesty refusing to cede the privilege of command. Henry performed valiant deeds of prowess; and during the conflict was often exposed to imminent peril.[1] The young baron de Biron carried the royal guidon, and repeatedly threw himself between the king and his adversaries, with devotion admirable to behold. In less than half an hour the squadrons of the enemy were broken and dispersed; and the soldiers, flying in confusion, abandoned their generals. Success in other parts of the field declared for the valiant royalists. The cavalry on both sides had yet only engaged in conflict. The Swiss levies of the League were unbroken; while the marshal de Biron, with his reserve of three hundred horse and two regiments of infantry, had remained a spectator of the fight.

[1] "Le roi," writes Biron, "y fit très bravement, généreusement et hardiment autant qu'il se peut, et quasi trop!" Lettre d'Armand de Gontaut baron de Biron, maréchal de France à M. Duhaillon, contenant ce qu'y s'est passé à la bataille d'Ivry. Marcel, l'Origine de la Monarchie Françoise, t. ii. p. 643. MS. Discours sur la bataille d'Ivry, par Villeroy. Sully—Mém. De Thou, liv. 98.

After the repulse of Mayenne and his division, the king, covered with dust, the blood streaming from slight wounds which he had received on the face and hands, returned to the charge, routed a detachment of Walloon soldiers, and captured its colours. Cries of "*Vive le roy! Victoire!*" resounded throughout the field. The army of the League, broken, dispersed, and intimidated after a fight of two hours, fled before its conqueror.

"Alors, les chefs effrayés, les soldats éperdus
L'un ne peut commander, l'autre n'obéit plus.
Ils jettent leurs drapeaux, ils courent, ils se renversent,
Poussent des cris affreux, se heurtent, se dispersent;
Les uns, sans résistance à leurs vainqueurs offerts,
Fléchissent les genoux, et demandent des fers.
D'autres, d'un pas rapide évitant sa poursuite,
Jusqu'aux rives de l'Eure emportés dans leur fuite
Dans les profondes eaux vont se précipiter
Et courent au trépas qu'ils veulent éviter!"[1]

Mayenne made a vain attempt to rally the centre, in which he was supported by Egmont; but after a brief conflict, he retired from the field, and sought refuge in the village of Ivry. The duke de Nemours, the chevalier d'Aumale, Bassompierre, and Tavannes retreated in headlong flight to Chartres. The king, attended by Aumont, Biron, Mornay, and the grand Prior, seeing no enemy to contend against, then repaired to confer with the marshal de

[1] La Henriade, chant. 8.

Biron, who had never stirred from the post assigned him. The Swiss regiments of the League still maintained their position; but disdaining to follow in flight with their commanders, they lowered their arms and banners in token of submission. The king, at first, resolved to charge and put them to rout; but after a conference with Biron, he accepted their surrender. Biron then dismounted from his horse. "Sire!" exclaimed he, "you have to-day performed the charge of the marshal de Biron, and the marshal de Biron has taken the part of the king. To you alone we owe this glorious and noble victory! Your foes have fled! *Vive le roy!*" "*Maréchal, mon ami!*" responded Henry, "give thanks and praises to Almighty God! Victory and glory are alone attributes of the Lord of Hosts!" "Then," writes Biron,[1] "two large battalions of Swiss surrendered to me; the which I posted in the rear of ours. Twenty detached bands likewise laid down arms. Moreover, there were eight hundred horsemen posted between these said battalions and our ranks, who, perceiving my advance, tried to escape. But our king sent after these in pursuit, and chased them to the town of Ivry, with great slaughter. The enemy thronged in this

[1] Lettre du maréchal de Biron à Duhaillon datée de ce camp de Mantes, le 24 Mars, 1590.

town of Ivry. The first of the fugitive bands broke down the bridge (over the Eure), and threw up barricades, which were the cause of the complete destruction of the enemy.[1] The king, thereupon, passed the river at Anet, and commanded me to send troops to attack this said town of Ivry, which we promptly executed. I believe more than four hundred horsemen of the enemy there fell, which is as the loss of four thousand men in open battle. We seized four pieces of artillery; most of their baggage in which were many precious things, besides the treasure. Our king crossed the Eure at Anet, and pursued the enemy to Mantes. His majesty passed the night in the village of Rosny." The detachment of Spanish and Walloon soldiers under Egmont was cut to pieces; such was the animosity of the royal soldiers against these foreign troops, that scarcely one man of them received quarter. Fifteen hundred were slain; some on the field of battle; others at the ford close to Ivry. The young count d'Egmont[2] was found amongst the slain. Henry

[1] The conduct of the duke de Mayenne, in breaking down the bridge over the Eure after he had passed, is severely animadverted upon by the duke de Nevers, in his able "Traité de la Prise des Armes," 1589. It caused the death of hundreds, who, following the duke in his flight, found their retreat cut off.

[2] Philippe, count d'Egmont, prince de Gavre et de Steenhuyse, son of Lamorel, count d'Egmont, and Sabine of Bavière.

commanded him honourable interment, as Egmont was cousin-german to the queen dowager Louise de Lorraine, widow of Henry III. All the banners and flags of the League were captured, also the flame-coloured standard of the Spaniards. The duke de Mayenne lost his guidon, and his private baggage and camp equipage.

Amongst the king's prisoners were MM. de la Chateigneraye, de Vivonne, and de Bois-Dauphin the noted Leaguer, the bastard of Brunswick; the count of Friesland commandant of the reiters, the count of Medavy, and others. The trumph of Henry's victory, however, was lessened by the loss of the counts de Clermont and de Schomberg. Amongst the cavaliers severely wounded were the counts de Lude and de Choisy, M. d'O, who fought gallantly by the side of the king, and M. de Rosny. The duke de Mayenne first sought refuge in the village of Ivry: news, however, being brought to him that Henry was passing the river at Anet; and that Biron was advancing to the assault of Ivry, the duke took to horse, and fled to the neighbouring town of Mantes. The inhabitants, at first, peremptorily refused to open their gates to the fugitives; but

He left no children by his consort, Marie de Hoorne. When some deputies from the Union harangued the count, and made allusion to his gallant father, Egmont basely replied, "Ne parlez pas de lui! il méritait la mort! c'étoit un rebelle!"

were at last induced to admit the duke on the positive assurance given by one of his officers that he had seen le Béarnnois dead on the field. The time which Henry lost during his parley on the battle-field with Biron, gave the duke an advantage, of which he had not slowly availed himself. Had Henry followed in pursuit, the capture of Mayenne would, probably, have consummated this glorious triumph over the League and its adherents. The king remained for the night at Rosny, a village one league from Mantes, intending on the following morning to summon the Mantois to surrender their town. At Rosny, Henry lodged in miserable quarters; but the magnitude of his success rendered the king careless of discomfort. As his majesty was sitting down to sup, an officer entered and announced the arrival of the marshal d'Aumont, whose bravery and skill admirably seconded Henry's designs during the important events of the day. The king rose and received the marshal at the foot of the stairs. Embracing him affectionately, his majesty invited d'Aumont to sup, and compelled him to take his place at table.[1] The king discoursed with his officers until a late hour. He thanked them repeatedly

[1] De Thou—Hist. de son Temps, liv. 98. Vie du maréchal d'Aumont—Du Ferron, Hist. des Connétables, Maréchaux, etc. edited by Denis Godefroy, in fol. Paris. Péréfixe, Hist. de Henri le Grand.

for their courage and devotion; and made merry jests on the anticipated discomfiture of madame de Montpensier, and her colleagues in Paris.

At daybreak, the king despatched the vidame de Chartres with forty horse to reconnoitre, and ascertain the disposition of the people of Mantes. Mayenne had been there received with reluctance; for, like many other subjects of the Union, the inhabitants were waiting for the first convenient opportunity to cast off allegiance to the League. So great was the panic in the neighbourhood, that the vidame approached close to the gates of the town without meeting a single individual. At length a soldier of the escort perceived two men creeping stealthily towards one of the gates, through a vineyard close to the principal suburb. The men, finding themselves discovered, rushed to the gate, followed by several of the royal soldiers, and gave an alarm. Two hundred men armed with arquebuses immediately appeared on the ramparts, and hailed the vidame and his escort. The vidame replied, "That he had been sent by his majesty the king to exhort the townsmen to surrender; that the king had gained a great battle over the troops of the League, and was ready to pardon and protect the inhabitants of Mantes, provided that they submitted to his royal authority." A crowd, during the parley,

gathered on the ramparts. The people commenced vociferous acclamations of *Vive le roy ! A bas la Ligue !* "Assure his majesty," replied the commandant, "that we ask nothing better than to acknowledge so puissant and valiant a prince; and that we are resolved to live and die his faithful subjects." A deputation of inhabitants was nominated on the spot to carry to Henry the keys of the city, and to pray his majesty to take up his abode in Mantes.[1]

The duke de Mayenne, meantime, received timely advice through a captain of the city wards, of the resolve of the people of Mantes to admit the king. With the utmost precipitation, therefore, whilst the vidame de Chartres was haranguing the garrison, the duke remounted his horse, and, followed by the miserable residue of his army, fled towards St. Denis.

On the same day, March 14th, and at almost the same hour, during which the battle of Ivry was fought, another notable success attended the royal arms in Auvergne. The count de Rendan, general of the League, was repulsed from before the walls of Issoire, and slain in an action subsequently fought: a victory celebrated by queen Marguerite by a great discharge of artillery from the ramparts of her strong fortress of Usson.

[1] Cayet, Chronologie Novennaire.

On the 16th day of March, King Henry, attended by his principal nobles, made solemn entry into the town of Mantes. The cannon saluted, and the bells of the churches pealed a welcome to the valiant king. The loyal greeting of the people so gratified the king, that he determined to translate his council of state from Tours to Mantes. The vicinity of the town to Paris offered many facilities for the transaction of public business. Mantes was the centre of a district loyal and wealthy, and a place more accessible than the distant towns on the Loire. "The king," writes the marshal de Biron, "after mature consideration, intends to send for his council from Tours to establish it in this his good town of Mantes."[1] The day following his arrival, King Henry nominated Salomon de Béthune, brother of M. de Rosny, his governor and commandant in Mantes; which was the first notable benefaction bestowed by Henri Quatre on the family of his future faithful servant, the duke de Sully.[2]

[1] Lettre de Biron à Duhaillon, containing a relation of the battle of Ivry. Marcel, Origine de la Monarchie française.

[2] Mémoires de duc de Sully, liv. 3.

CHAPTER III.

1590.

Effect of the Battle of Ivry upon the Parisian populace.—Despondency of the duke de Mayenne.—He is visited at St. Denis by the legate, and by the Spanish ambassador.—Counsel of madame de Montpensier.—Letters addressed by the duke to the king of Spain and to pope Sixtus.—Henry establishes his court at Mantes.—Troubles in Bretagne.—Betrothal of the duke de Bellegarde to Gabrielle d'Estrées.—He lauds the beauty and grace of Gabrielle to the king.—House of Estrées.—History of mademoiselle d'Estrées.—Her numerous suitors.—Betrothed to M. de Villars.—The king visits the château de Cœuvres.—Conferences of Noisy.—Surrender of Corbeil.—Bulls of Pope Sixtus V.—He favours the cause of Henry IV.—His dissensions with the Spanish envoys in Rome.—Arrival in the royal camp of the bishop of Cenada.—Demise of Charles X.—Siege of Paris.—Details.—Correspondence of Henry with queen Elizabeth.—He recalls the chancellor de Cheverny.—Council of State.—Capitulation of St. Denis.—Siege of Paris.—Letter of the duchesse de Mayenne to her husband.

INTELLIGENCE of the issue of the battle of Ivry reached Paris on Monday, the 19th day of March,

by the sieur de Tremblecourt, *aide de camp* to the duke de Mayenne. Consternation silenced for an interval the clamour of faction. The Parisians daily expected to behold the army of Le Navarrois before their walls: and such, in fact, was the counsel of many of the king's most experienced officers. The victorious banner of Coutras had been furled by the king to lay at the feet of madame de Guiche; and now the *oriflamme* of France, before which the foes of Henry IV. fled at Ivry, was likewise lowered in homage to charms which for long exercised potent fascination over the versatile mind of king Henry.

The duke de Mayenne and the remnant of his army passed through Pontoise, and on Thursday, March 20th, reached St. Denis. There the duke established his quarters, not daring to confront the anger of the citizens of Paris. Mayenne dreaded the rabid declamations of the *curés* of the capital; and the taunts of the fierce demagogues of the Seize, whom he had recently abased. He deprecated the wrath of his sister, the "termagant duchess;" and feared the ironical condolence of the ambassador Mendoza. The following day, a deputation of the more peacefully disposed citizens waited upon the duke to tender him sympathy; and to promise that a subsidy should be proposed to re-establish the treasury. Mendoza, accompanied by the cardinal-legate, by the com-

mander de Morea, and by the archbishop of Lyons also paid Mayenne a visit. The former consented to despatch an express to Madrid and to the Flemish viceroy Farnese, to palliate, as far as possible, the adverse tidings of the defeat at Ivry; and to make urgent demand for succours. The crisis was imminent; and the indulgence of jealousies or recrimination, the ambassador foresaw, might be fatal to the cause. During the evening, Mayenne received further consolation by the arrival of the duchesses de Mayenne and de Montpensier. The irritable dejection of her brother was so palpable, that madame de Montpensier feared lest the license with which she usually expatiated on affairs might consummate Henry's victory, by inducing the submission of Mayenne himself! She, accordingly, inspirited the duke by cheering words, attributing his overthrow to the cowardice of the German reiters; and spoke positively of the zealous cooperation of the leaders of the sections to aid in re-establishing affairs.[1] Above all, she urgently admonished the duke to enter Paris, and preside at his council, as usual. Such, nevertheless, was the popular despondency, that there is no doubt

[1] "Madame de Montpensier et son frère firent semer un bruit que le Béarnnois (ainsi appellèrent-ils le roy) estoit ou mort, ou tellement blessé qu'il n'en pouvait eschapper." Discours sur la siège de Paris—Imprimé parmi les Mémoires de la Ligue.

if Henry, after the battle of Ivry, had advanced upon Paris, and publicly celebrated mass in his camp, that the gates of the capital would have been opened in the cordial joy of the people to salute, and be reconciled to so valiant a prince. Madame de Montpensier, however, totally lost faith in the military or diplomatic ability of her brother Mayenne; and, consequently, she still more resolutely espoused the party of the young duke de Guise, and made overtures for a *rapprochement* of interest with madame de Guise. This alliance, not being in accord with the then political views of mademoiselle de Guise, the latter subsequently contrived by applying directly to the king himself, to obtain permission for her mother to absent herself for a season from Paris.

Mayenne, immediately after his return to Paris, addressed letters to the pope and to the king of Spain, exculpatory of the recent disaster. He stated to Philip II. that, against his judgment, he had been compelled to offer battle to the Béarnnois, by the mutinous attitude of the Swiss legions, who clamorously demanded their pay, or threatened to disband; and that he had had every reason to expect a victorious campaign; which, but for the treacherous retreat of the Germans, at the commencement of the battle would undoubtedly have

crowned his arms. Mayenne concluded this despatch by protesting his respect for Spain; and his fervour to promote the interests of the League. He prayed that immediate aid might be afforded to the cause. To the pope, the duke wrote in terms of acrimonious reproach, at the instigation, it is believed, of the Spanish cabinet. Sixtus had little faith in the ultimate triumph of the Union The duke de Piney constantly affirmed to his holiness that French affairs were not comprehended in Rome: for that a prince, the elect of the great nobles, would, ere long, become the anointed monarch of France. The duke, moreover, expressed his conviction that king Henry was not unwilling to abjure his heresy provided that no coercion was used; and that his holiness abstained from hostile demonstrations, so that his majesty might with honour treat with the Holy See. Sixtus beheld with infinite displeasure the designs of Philip II. on the crown of France; his hoarded treasures besides, were destined for the promotion of that ambitious project which, throughout his pontificate, was never absent from his mind—the annexation of the kingdom of Naples to the patrimony of St. Peter. The duke de Mayenne, therefore, confident of the support of Spain, presumed to indite a despatch of severe reproof to the subtle old pontiff, on his avarice, inconstancy

of purpose, and indifference to the sacred cause of the Union. "During the life of the late king," wrote Mayenne, "your holiness was pleased to approve the taking up of arms, although the said king made outward profession of the true faith. Your holiness, therefore, is doubly bound to support a war, which we wage against a contumacious heretic, excommunicated by yourself. How strange and daunting is it, therefore, to behold your holiness so tardy in despatching even the succours which you have promised! For what purpose have you amassed such a vast treasure?[1] or how can such be better expended than for the preservation of the realm, to which your holiness and the popedom owe such extraordinary benefits?" The Spanish ambassador in Rome, the conde de Olivarez, was instructed to second the demands of the Union; and to conjure pope Sixtus to vouchsafe some satisfactory and substantial proof of *bienveillance*. These objurgations rendered the crafty old pontiff still more suspicious of the intentions of Philip II. He therefore peremptorily declared "that as the Holy See had no desire to promote civil war in France, except so as to insure the election of an orthodox successor to the throne on decease of Charles X., he would take time and

[1] Sixtus had six millions sterling in the coffers of his castle of St. Angelo.

ponder well before he sanctioned any fresh acts of hostility; but as Don Enrique de Guzman had been pleased in his remarks to forget the respect due to the supreme head of Christendom, his holiness desired that the ambassador might be superseded." Sixtus doggedly refused subsequently to hold conference with the count of Olivarez; and, after a further wrangle, the latter was recalled. The pope, whose favourable dispositions to king Henry would probably have facilitated a speedy pacification, was stricken by his mortal malady before the arrival of the duke de Sessa, the ambassador sent to replace Olivarez.

A meeting was next convened in Paris, at the lodging of the legate, to deliberate on the condition of affairs; and simultaneously, an assembly was holden at the Hôtel de Ville, called by the provost and municipality of Paris. Gaëtano made a conciliatory address. He presented the duke de Mayenne with the sum of 50,000 crowns, on behalf of the pope; which, however, it was reluctantly stated by the legate, his holiness desired might be alone employed for the relief of the famishing poor of the capital. The legate then announced that, in conformity with orders received from Rome, it was his intention to seek a conference with Le Navarrois, at the château de Noisy—the magnificent abode

of the duke de Retz—to ascertain upon what foundation many persons declared that Henri de Bourbon was ready to abjure his heresy; also, to propose certain articles tending to promote the pacification of the realm. The resolution of the legate created much altercation. Several members of the late Conseil de l'Union declared, that to parley with the heretic usurper was rank treason towards Charles X.; and that no accord could be made with Le Navarrois. Gaëtano, however, stated that such was the will of his holiness, who had already written an autograph letter to the marshal de Biron, exhorting the latter to use his good offices with the king of Navarre to bring about the conference; and, if possible, to arrest the march of the Huguenot army upon Paris.

Whilst these agitations were pending, Henry IV. was establishing his court and council of state in the town of Mantes. The wives and daughters of many of the royalist cavaliers responded with alacrity to Henry's summons. Nevertheless, to the great regret of the king's most trusty counsellors, madame de Beauvilliers quitted Senlis, and took up her abode in Mantes. The king also invited madame de Guercheville, to whom his majesty still persisted in making suit. "Sire, I will accept a husband from your majesty, but not dishonour!" was the resolute

reply of the marquise. Henry greatly commended the winning sweetness and dignity of madame de Guercheville's manner; and magnanimously said "that as madame la marquise proved herself to be a true lady of honour, she should fill the post of lady of honour, about the person of any future queen his consort." The king, moreover, promised eventually to negotiate a marriage for madame de Guercheville, honourable to herself and advantageous for her children. Henry kept his word; and bestowed the hand of the marquise on Charles Duplessis de Liancourt, count de Beaumont. This marriage, however, did not take place until the year 1594, when Henry himself signed the contract, and bestowed a rich reversion on the bride.[1] Mesdames de Simiers and d'Humières, both witty and beautiful coquettes, also graced the royal circle at Mantes. Madame de Chateaupers,[2] dexterous and lively, accepted the solemn homage of M. de Rosny; who, after the decease of her husband, gave her his hand in marriage.

The great ladies of the brilliant court of Henry III., however, still held aloof: some being in alliance with the League; others, fearing to

[1] Dreux de Radier—Vie d'Antoinette de Pons, marquise de Guercheville, etc.

[2] Rachel de Cochefilet. François Heurault, seigneur de Chateaupers, died of the wounds which he received at the battle of Ivry. He was a relative of the chancellor Cheverny.

acknowledge a heretic king, lived a life of retirement in their castles. Madame de Noirmoutiers, lovely, and *intrigante* as ever, wearied herself in vain regrets for the court in Poitou. The duchesse de Nevers, whose vivacity and grace during the late reign rendered her one of the most popular personages in Paris, now studied politics and polemics with her husband in his palace at Nevers. Madame d'Epernon, whose youth and exquisite toilette had greatly captivated the king, resided at Angoulême under the jealous eye of her consort, by whom she was adored. The duchesse de Mercœur enacted in Bretagne a faint imitation of the rôle played by madame de Montpensier in Paris. The duchesse de Joyeuse, sister of queen Louise, lived in strict retirement, employed by turns in rebuking the reckless treason of her kindred of Lorraine; in praying with her sister the widowed queen at Chenonceau; and in writing sentimental love epistles to the duke de Piney, his majesty's ambassador to the Holy See. At Chenonceau, queen Louise maintained most lugubrious solitude. Her majesty inhabited two apartments hung with black serge and contiguous to the chapel, in which mass was celebrated at certain hours, both by night and day.[1] The wail of mourning and the

[1] Vie de Louise de Lorraine, par le père Thomas d'Avignon. Hilarion de Coste—Dames Illustres.

solemn harmony of dirges and antiphones now alone echoed through the gorgeous saloons, in which queen Catherine and her sons held revel. On the strong rock of Usson, queen Marguerite defied fate: beautiful, alluring, and profligate as ever, Marguerite pursued the even tenour of her vicious pleasures; occasionally, by the issue of some able manifesto or epistle, demonstrating that tact and accomplishment of mind, which, in addition to her personal gifts, rendered her enmity formidable. Madame Catherine de Bourbon, the sister of the king, resided in retirement in a fanciful palace in the park of Pau, constructed by queen Jeanne d'Albret, and named by her Castelbeziat. The young princess had a strong will and a passionate temper. She was strict in her religious observancies; and devoted to the austerities practised by her mother. She delighted in the discourse and the writings of her Calvinist ministers; and maintained constant correspondence with Théodore de Bèze. The princess, moreover, entertained a strong preference for the count de Soissons — an attachment greatly disapproved by the king, her brother. Catherine, had selected the countess de Guiche as her first lady and *confidente;* with whom she lived on terms of easy familiarity. Madame de Guiche, it is said, revenged herself for Henry's incon-

stancy by frequently speaking of the young count, and lauding his deportment before the princess;[1] which she favourably contrasted with that of the prince de Dombes, whose fidelity, it was known, Henry wished to reward by the hand of his sister. The duchesse de Retz, who had the repute of being the most learned lady in France, and the duchesse d'Usez, had both embarked in the perilous fortunes of the League; which, of course, numbered amongst its adherents the princesses[2] of the house of Lorraine.

M. de Bellegarde, meantime, gallant to all the ladies assembled at Mantes, shewed peculiar admiration for no one. When rallied by the king on this insensibility, the duke replied, "that no lady present at Mantes could approach in peerless charms *la dame de ses pensées*, mademoiselle Gabrielle d'Estrées!" The king made some incredulous response; when Bellegarde requested his majesty to accompany him to the château de Cœuvres, and judge for himself. Henry jestingly acceded; "but," says mademoiselle de

[1] "Corisandre prit son parti. Toute la vengeance qu'elle prit de l'infidélité de son amant, fut de favoriser malgré lui les projets de marriage de la princesse Cathérine avec le comte de Soissons." Vie de Corisandre ou Diane, comtesse de Guiche—Dreux de Radier.

[2] The duchesses de Mayenne, Montpensier, Guise, Mercœur, d'Elbœuf, and the noble ladies their kindred.

Guise in her lively memoirs,[1] "Bellegarde, the unfortunate lover, became by this imprudent request the artificer of his own misfortunes; for, owing to that fatal sight, he hazarded his fortunes, and lost the favour of the king." The château de Cœuvres, where mademoiselle d'Estrées resided, was close to Soissons. Her father, Antoine d'Estrées, marquis de Cœuvres,[2] was deputy-grand master of artillery, and a valiant and honourable officer, who loyally served his country. Her mother was Françoise Babou de la Bourdaisière, granddaughter of the famous Florimond Robertet, secretary of state, in the reign of Henry II. Madame d'Estrées, nevertheless, led a most abandoned life, and was virtually separated from her husband, who, during the wars, inhabited the castle of Cœuvres with his daughters.[3] Gabrielle d'Estrées was born in the year 1572,

[1] Hist. des amours de Henri IV., par Louise Marguerite de Lorraine Guise.

[2] The marquis de Cœuvres had Bourbon blood in his veins. His ancestor Raoul d'Estrées, marshal of France in the reign of St. Louis, espoused a princess of Courtenay; while Jean d'Estrées, grand master of artillery and father of the marquis married Catherine de Vendôme, daughter of Jacques, sieur de Bonneval, illegitimate son of Jean, count de Vendôme, great-grandfather of Henri IV.

[3] Madame d'Estrées and her sisters were notorious for their profligate lives; the eldest sister Marie, married the count de St. Aignan, and was the mother of Marie de Beauvilliers. Isabel, the second sister, espoused the marquis de Sourdis, and was celebrated for her beauty and profligate life.

and was consequently eighteen years old when the king first saw her. The chroniclers and poets of the age exhaust every term of admiration in lauding the exquisite beauty, which beamed on the sight of Henry. "Madame Gabrielle was the most lovely woman without dispute in France: her hair was of a beautiful *blonde cendrée*; her eyes blue and full of fire; her complexion was like alabaster; her nose well shaped and aquiline; a mouth filled with pearly teeth, and lips upon which the god of Love perpetually dwelt; a stately throat and perfect bust; a slender hand; in short, she possessed the deportment of a goddess—such were the charms which none could gaze upon with impunity."[1]

Immediately after the accession of Henry IV., the duke de Bellegarde had been sent by his majesty on a mission to M. d'Estrées. Bellegarde then first saw Mlle. d'Estrées, who had never appeared at the court of Henry III. The charms of *la belle Gabrielle* made profound impression upon the duke, who rapturously declared that never had he seen beauty so perfect. Mademoiselle d'Estrées, however, was then affianced to André de Brancas sieur de Villars, brother of the marquis de Villars, who had espoused her elder sister, Juliette Hippolyte d'Estrées. M. de Villars, who eventually became governor of

[1] Dreux de Radier. Aubigné, t. 1. Mathieu, t. 2.

Rouen for the League, was a cavalier of great repute and honour, but possessed only of moderate wealth. It does not appear, that the heart of the young beauty had been consulted on this proposed alliance; for Gabrielle received the suit of Bellegarde with visible pleasure. The graceful and accomplished duke so insinuated himself into her favour, that Gabrielle with tears, besought her father to bestow her on Bellegarde, who honourably asked her hand in marriage. M. d'Estrées, feeling the advantage of so puissant an alliance, was easily induced to consent; and in his presence the duke de Bellegarde and Gabrielle exchanged rings. The duke, after presenting his picture to his betrothed bride, returned to court; where breaking off the relations which he had formerly entertained with madame d'Humières, he faithfully devoted himself to the beautiful Gabrielle.

Meanwhile, as the presence of the abbess of Montmartre at Mantes gave offence to some amongst the more rigidly orthodox of Henry's subjects, the king speedily determined to send her back to Senlis; and desired the duke de Bellegarde to lead the escort. Bellegarde asked the royal permission afterwards to visit his *fiancée* at Cœuvres; and, upon some jesting remark then made by Henry on the alleged beauty of mademoiselle d'Estrées, Bellegarde was imprudent enough to reiterate his

entreaties, that the king would accompany him thither. The visit of his majesty to the abode of M. d'Estrées was an event not likely to create surprise, the king being in the immediate neighbourhood at Senlis. Gabrielle, accordingly, presented herself to kiss her sovereign's hand; and to offer his majesty refreshment. Her beauty and innocence charmed the king, who discoursed merrily during the repast; on taking leave, however, the admiration of the king was openly demonstrated.[1] Henry then complimented M. d'Estrées on the beauty of his daughter; and commanded him to bring her to grace his court at Mantes. His majesty, attended by Bellegarde, then returned to Senlis in very pensive mood; from whence he proceeded to Mantes, where affairs demanded his presence. From that period, the king constantly sent to compliment and to inquire after the health of mademoiselle d'Estrées; never, it was observed, selecting M. de Bellegarde as his messenger. The admiration so vividly demonstrated by king Henry did not, however, shake the allegiance of Gabrielle towards her betrothed, to whom she was sincerely attached. The duke's matrimonial proposals, to which so many ladies

[1] An old rhyming chronicle says of Gabrielle:—

"Heureux qui baiser peut sa bouche cenabrine
Ses lèvres de corail, sa denture ivoirine!"

Sable—Muse Chasseresse.

aspired, flattered the ambition of mademoiselle d'Estrées. His great wealth and handsome person gratified her vanity; and, to quote her own words, "she desired no better fortune than to become the wife of M. de Bellegarde."

The important conferences of Noisy intervened to divert the king for the moment from the prosecution of his designs upon the heart of mademoiselle d'Estrées. Henry, therefore, once more placed himself at the head of his army, and marched to reduce the town of Corbeil.

The fortnight which Henry wasted in Mantes, had given his enemies leisure to recover from their panic. The commander de Morea was despatched to hasten the movements of the duke of Parma. The duke de Nemours and the chevalier d'Aumale quitted Chartres, where they found refuge after the battle of Ivry, and returned to Paris. Provisions were purchased with the donation made to the city by the cardinal-legate: while, on the news of the probable advance of the royal army, the sieur de Givry—who held the bridge of Charenton on the river Marne—in defiance of his duty and his oath of allegiance to the king, allowed ten thousand hogsheads of wine and three thousand bushels of wheat to pass into the city, at the request of the duchesse de Guise, "which relief may be said to have enabled the Parisians to defy the king." The duke

de Mayenne quitted Paris after nominating the duke de Nemours to supreme command over the capital, and established his head-quarters in Soissons. At the same time the legate, attended by his coadjutors the Italian bishops and Bellarmine, repaired to the castle of Noisy, five leagues from Paris, to confer with Biron on the condition of affairs.

All the bridges over the rivers Seine and Marne, between Rouen and Paris, and Lagny and the capital, were in Henry's possession; a conference, therefore, was necessary, as the subtle prelates observed, "*per acquistar tempo, è haver più commodità d'apparechiarse alla difesa.*" On the part of the king, Biron was present, accompanied by the secretary-of-state Revol, and a great suite of gentlemen, among whom was the commandant of the district, Anne d'Anglure, sieur de Givry. The Jesuit Bellarmine opened the conference. The cold and dictatorial tone of his address, though much applauded by the League, gave offence to the royal deputies. Gaëtano then spoke. His eminence dwelt on the horrors to which the realm was exposed; and on the unholy war waged by king Henry against the orthodox. He commented pathetically on the distress and forbearance of his holiness; and concluded his oration by proposing the following articles—which, the cardinal said might be re-

ceived as a basis for solid peace. 1st. That the states of the realm should be convoked by mutual consent; and the decision of the representatives of the nation be considered final and binding by all parties, royalist and leaguer. 2ndly. That a truce should be proclaimed for the better consideration of this proposal. Biron appreciated at once the dishonest intents of the legate. "For what purpose should we agree to a truce? The affairs of king Henry flourish. We will not make truce, unless your eminence can propose terms, the first article of which recognises the royal title of our august sovereign!"

A warm debate ensued; during which the cardinal was confounded at the enthusiasm displayed by the nobles present for the cause of the king. M. de Givry was especially honoured by the notice and by the discourse of the prelate. His easiness in having permitted boats laden with provision to pass the pont de Charenton, unknown to the king, for the victualling of the capital; and the secret recommendation of madame de Guise, whose cavalier Givry entitled himself, raised the hope that he, at least, might be detached from the royal cause. Finding that his flattering appeals to the honour and patriotism of Givry were useless, the legate said, "But, at least, M. de Givry, repent and confess your

sin in upholding heresy. Ask absolution publicly, and I the representative of his holiness will declare you absolved!" Givry, who was addicted to jests and to immoderate laughter, fell instantly on his knees at the feet of the cardinal; and with piteous face, asked absolution for the ills which he had inflicted on the orthodox Parisians. Gaëtano solemnly pronounced the formula. Observing that Givry retained his penitential attitude, the legate asked what more he required. "Holy father! you have given me absolution for the ills which I have inflicted on your orthodox Parisians; now, grant me absolution for all the evil that I intend to do against these said Parisians. They will hear of me again!" The majority of personages present could not restrain their laughter at this sally; the legate, however, rose in great wrath, and recalling his absolution rebuked the impious and daring blasphemer, as he now termed Givry; and predicted that ere long the vengeance of the Most High would smite him.[1] A splendid banquet given by the cardinal de Gondy to the plenipotentiaries, restored harmony, in some measure; but the legate and his

[1] De Thou—Hist. de son Temps liv. 98. "Ne dura cette entrevue qu'une heure devant diner et deux heures après." Discours de ce qui s'est passé en l'armée du roy depuis la bataille donnée près d'Ivry.—Mettayer, à Tours, 1590.

suite soon withdrew, and returned to Paris highly chagrined with the result of their mission.

On Thursday, April 9th, Corbeil surrendered to the king. The royal army amounted to fifteen thousand men, well armed, furnished with plentiful ammunition, and inspired by the glorious memory of the fields of Coutras, Arques, and Ivry. The terror of the people of Paris was indescribable. The duke de Nemours hastily took measures for the preservation of the city; and the legate privately despatched the bishop of Ceneda on a mission to Biron, again to propose conferences—overtures which the marshal declared himself willing to promote. His eminence also sent his nephew, Peter Gaëtano, to hasten the advance of the duke of Parma.[1] The council of Union, at which the archbishop of Lyons now presided, in order to tranquillize and restrain the people, submitted certain propositions to the Sorbonne, to the effect: "whether the Parisians might, in case of extremity, open their gates to the heretic Henri de Bourbon, and save themselves by subscribing a treaty? Also, whether it was an act pleasing and meritorious in the sight of God, to oppose the said Henri, even to death? and whether

[1] The following day Don Juan de Morea, was despatched to give greater weight to the entreaties of the legate's nephew Don Pietro.

such as perished in the cause might be esteemed to have won the crown of martyrdom?" The theologians accepted the discussion; and, after celebrating mass, a solemn debate ensued. A decree was then rendered, which prohibited intercourse, collusion, or accommodation with Henri de Bourbon, under pain of anathema; and proclaimed that all persons who persisted unto death were to be deemed defenders of the true faith, and to have gloriously earned the palm of martyrdom.[1]

Whilst Henry was at Corbeil he received despatches from the duke de Piney Luxembourg, who notified to his majesty the favourable dispositions of the pope. Sixtus addressed a brief to the Catholic nobles of the royal army by the same messenger; in which he gave them his benediction, and exhorted them, while rendering true service to their king, to remain constant to the faith. The pope, moreover, wrote to the cardinal-legate, expressing his displeasure that Gaëtano had established himself in Paris; and commanding his eminence to retire to Mantes, and place himself in communication with the cardinals de Vendôme and de Lenoncourt. The old pontiff, when urged by the Spanish ambassa-

[1] Verbal du Sorbonne—Ce 7ème jour de Mai, 1590, L'Etoile, Journal de Henri IV. Mémoire des vingt-huit Evêques, imprimée chez Jean Baptiste, en 1717.

dor the duke de Sessa—in the only audience he granted him—to sanction the claims of the Infanta, flew into a fit of rage, and flatly declared his intention to put down the civil war in France; and to persuade the king to make abjuration of his heresy. The evident indisposition of the pope to proceed to extreme measures incensed Philip II. His ambassadors, Olivarez and Sessa, presumed even to menace his holiness with deposition from his pontifical dignities, if he, the father of Christendom, should publicly countenance heresy.[1] The rage into which these threats threw the fiery old pontiff is supposed to have accelerated the progress of the malady with which he was at this period smitten; and that ultimately proved fatal. Some contemporary writers, however, do not scruple to declare their belief that poison was resorted to, in order to remove a pontiff, whose disapproval of the measures contemplated by Spain and her Gallic allies must speedily have brought the war to a conclusion.

From Corbeil the king rapidly advanced, and receiving the submission of the towns of Lagny, Melan, and Provins, encamped on the 18th

[1] Cayet—"Quand le pape fut sommé par le duc de Sesse, d'excommunier tous les Catholiques royaux, Sixte répondit, 'qu'il n'en ferait rien.'" The pope also said publicly to the duke de Piney: "M'increscе d'aver scommunicato il rey, essendo di tai costumi: me io che nol hò fatto perche l'era fato."

day of April, at Brie, where he spent the festival of Easter. The bishop of Cenada[1] arrived soon after in camp. The legate Gaëtano, mortified at the little alacrity displayed by the Spanish council; and intimidated by the letters addressed to him by his holiness, was now well disposed to any accommodation which might save Paris from the horrors of the impending siege. Nevertheless, the sole instructions given to the bishop of Cenada amounted to a request "that his majesty would grant an armistice of several months' duration; and that envoys might be despatched to Rome and Madrid to negotiate a peace." "Monseigneur," replied Biron, "what you ask is impossible! The king is not indisposed for peace; but his majesty entirely declines the intervention of foreign potentates." Before the bishop departed, he celebrated high mass in the camp; and afterwards conferred with the duke de Longueville, the grand Prior count d'Auvergne, and other chief nobles.[2] To several of these personages the bishop expressed an intense curiosity to see the king. By the intervention of the abbé d'Elbène, an interview was arranged. Henry owed a great debt to the

[1] Marco Antonio de Mocenigo, brother of the Venetian ambassador resident at Tours.

[2] The bishop informed these nobles that the legate sent them his benediction, but could not quit Paris, on account of the menacing proximity of the royal army.

Venetian republic; and the bishop was brother to Moncenigo the ambassador of Venice, who had complimented him when at Tours in the name of the Seignory. The bishop, accordingly, took leave of the marshal de Biron; and left the camp at the hour when the king, who that day had indulged in the pastime of the chase, was returning to his lodgings. When Mocenigo came in sight of the royal cortége, he dismounted and made obeisance as his majesty approached. Henry gave him gracious greeting; and commanding the prelate to remount his horse, conversed on matters of state for the space of half an hour.[1] His majesty said: "He took it ill that the legate and his ecclesiastics should have espoused the party of Spain and the League, in opposition to the express desire of his holiness; but from the antecedents of the legate, his present proceedings were not astonishing; but that he was, nevertheless, determined to establish his royal rights, or to die in the attempt. As for the Parisians, if they submitted, their town should be spared and their lives respited." The king paid many personal compliments to the prelate; and dismissed him highly satisfied with his reception.

[1] Discours de ce qui s'est passé en l'armée du roy depuis le 13 d'Avril, jusqu'au 2 du mois de Mai, 1590—Mettayer, à Tours, 1590.

The duke de Nemours governor of Paris, during this interval, continued to make extraordinary exertions to provide against the inevitable fate to which the capital seemed doomed. Fifteen hundred landsknechts, under Collato; and the troop commanded by Louis de l'Hôpital, sieur de Vitry, entered the city. Many blocks of houses in the faubourgs and upon the walls of the city were pulled down, that platforms might be built and the fortifications strengthened; double chains were also stretched across the river. The duke caused reckoning to be made of the quantity of provisions in the public stores—comprehending corn, wine, barley, and dry vegetables: the result showed that food enough was accumulated to feed two hundred thousand persons during the space of one month.

The head-quarters of the king on the 9th of May were in the abbey of Chelles; while part of his staff was billeted in the abbey de Maubuisson, close to Pontoise, of which convent madame Angélique d'Estrées, sister of mademoiselle d'Estrées, was abbess. Incredible scandals ensued: for during this lawless period, the cloister proved no refuge, ecclesiastical authority being derided. By the 14th of May, the city and district of Paris were isolated from the rest of

France.[1] The bridge at the confluence of the Marne and Seine was guarded by M. de Givry. The marshal d'Aumont kept watch over the pont de St. Cloud. Strong garrisons kept the towns of Corbeil, Pontoise, l'Isle Adam, and Honorine. "In short," says an eye-witness, "every bridge between Paris and Troyes, Paris and Rouen, and between Sens and Montereau, and all the bridges on the Oise were in his majesty's hands." The royal army encamped before Paris from the porte St. Antoine to Montmartre. Its first hostile proceeding was to burn the windmills of the district. On the 10th of May, a warm skirmish ensued between the garrison of Paris and the outposts of the royal army, in which La Noue was severely wounded.

The same day that the king encamped before Paris, news reached the capital of the death of the king of the League, the cardinal de Bourbon, in the castle of Fontenoy. The health of the old prelate had rapidly declined since his removal

[1] "The capture of Lagny, St. Maur, and the bridge of Charenton shut up the river Marne; Montereau, where there was a strong garrison commanded by M. de Chauliot, closed the river Yonne; the garrisons of Moret, Melun, Bray and Corbeil, stopped up the Seine from above, while the marshal d'Aumont held le pont de St. Cloud below. Poissy and Conflans were strongly garrisoned; and Beaumont defended by a garrison, rendered it impossible for boats to navigate the river Oise."—Davila, liv. xi.

from Chinon. Moreover, he had recently submitted to a painful and dangerous operation, from the effects of which he never rallied. By the permission of the king, the duke de Nevers paid the cardinal a visit. Subdued by illness, and by the dreary isolation in which he had lived since his arrest at Blois, the cardinal wept bitterly during his interview with the duke. He exhorted the latter to reconcile himself with "le roy son neveu;" "for," said he, "the star of Bourbon never will set!" Sorrowful, also, were his reminiscences of the late queen Catherine de Medici, whom the cardinal termed "a great queen, a glorious genius, a woman of a thousand resources." He, moreover, entreated the duke to intercede with king Henry, so that his remains might be interred in the chapel of the superb Chartreuse of Gaillon.[1] After the demise of the cardinal, the duke de Nevers laid this petition before the king, who immediately assented. The body was embalmed, and conveyed under escort by night to Tours. There the cardinal de Vendôme, the count de Soissons, and his brother, the prince de Conti, nephews of the deceased

[1] The Chartreuse is about three quarters of a league from the castle of Gaillon; the chapel was built by the cardinal de Bourbon, and within it is the superb mausoleum of the counts de Soissons Bourbon. The castle of Gaillon was one of the most magnificent of the many splendid residences in France. The cardinal de Bourbon died May 8, 1590.

cardinal, joined the cortége, and accompanied it to Gaillon; where the body was privately interred in a vault before the high altar of the monastery.

The decease of the cardinal augmented the perplexities of the League. Philip II. instantly wrote to the duke de Mayenne, exhorting him to proclaim another king; and plainly indicated the young duke de Guise as the sovereign who would be most acceptable to the Spanish cabinet. But all serious negotiation was, for the present, postponed, in the dismay occasioned by the sudden march of the king upon Paris. Mayenne, in order to conciliate his Catholic majesty, issued an edict, convoking the states of the realm to meet in Paris, to proceed to the election of a Catholic and orthodox king. Meantime, the duke announced his resolve, despite the vacancy of the throne, to continue to conduct affairs under the same form and titles as of yore. He then proceeded to Condé to confer with the duke of Parma; who had received instructions from Spain to co-operate with Mayenne in every feasible project for the overthrow of the "usurper." Philip who, in right of his daughter, already looked upon France as his own, sent a missive to Farnese, in which his majesty "bade him succour his good town of Paris, if he wished to obliterate from his royal mind the destruction of the great Armada, hastened by the negligence of

the viceroy in providing for the victualling of the fleet." Thus addressed by his royal master, Farnese assured Mayenne of his prompt intervention. He gave him immediate succour of a Spanish regiment, commanded by don Antonio de Zuñiga; of a regiment of Italian soldiers, and a body of Flemish cavalry. Moreover, the duke promised to follow in person at the head of his army, and compel Le Navarrois to raise the siege of Paris. Thus reinforced, Mayenne returned to France. As he passed through Cambray, his promises and menaces induced M. de Balagny,[1] with the garrison of the Cambresis, to join his standard. The king, informed of the duke's march, boldly determined to intercept his progress. From Argenteuil, therefore, Henry advanced upon Crepy, accomplishing in one day a march of eighteen leagues. The duke, however, hearing of the king's intention, promptly entrenched his army in Laon; and defended himself with such vigour, that Biron, after two ineffectual attempts to storm the town, or to compel the enemy to offer battle, withdrew. Henry took malicious pleasure in thus harassing the movements of the duke de Mayenne; whose

[1] The sieur de Balagny, illegitimate son of the famous orator and theologian, Jean de Montluc, bishop of Valence, espoused for his second wife, Diane d'Estrées, the eldest daughter of the marquis de Cœuvres.

mental apathy and corpulent person were standing jests amongst the royal troopers.

The blockade of Paris, meantime, was strictly maintained, and bloody skirmishes daily ensued in the faubourgs, between the besieged and the besiegers. On the 10th of May, the chevalier d'Aumale made a successful *sortie;* and recaptured the abbey of St. Antoine des Champs, garrisoned by the enemy. The soldiers of the League, however, incurred great obloquy by the sack of the convent. The sacred vessels of the church, the gifts of successive monarchs, were carried away; and even the oratory of the abbess was despoiled of its rich ornaments. The assaults of the besiegers were chiefly directed upon the faubourg St. Germain and its opulent and populous district. The intention of the king was to starve his rebellious Parisians into a surrender; and the reluctance known to have been expressed by Henry to bombard and give the city up to pillage, contributed much to the obstinate resistance offered by the besieged.

For the better government of the beleaguered city, the closest relations were established between the governor the duke de Nemours,[1] the cardinal-legate, the Spanish ambassador, and

[1] Eldest son of Anne d'Este, duchess dowager of Guise, by her second husband, Jacques de Savoye, duc de Nemours. The duke died unmarried, 1595.

madame de Montpensier. The duke de Nemours had little experience in arms; but he was young, energetic, and devoted to the orthodox faith. Gaëtano, pretending that the siege prevented him from obeying the commands of his holiness to retire from Paris, announced that, as the representative of the Holy See, he was ready to assume the office of pacificator. Nevertheless, throughout the siege, he acted a subordinate part to the ambassador Mendoza. The latter actively espoused the interests of the League. He presented funds during the month of May for the casting of thirteen pieces of cannon; and undertook to pay and furnish rations for the troop of three hundred horse, under Vitry. The greatest alacrity, spirit, and perseverance were demonstrated during the first three weeks of the siege. The preachers of Paris kept alive the popular fanaticism; while madame de Montpensier revised the proclamations issued—inventing, embellishing, or suppressing intelligence, so as to suit the temper of the Parisians, and the policy of the League. The *curés*, who at this season rendered themselves most conspicuous, were the famous Lincestre, Hamilton, Pierre Cristin, Boucher, a Franciscan monk who was nicknamed Feu-Ardent, and Bernard de Montgaillard, called le petit Feuillant[1]—likewise a

[1] Le Petit Feuillant was the confessor of the wife of Acarie,

fierce incendiary. The chief leaders of the sections were Bussy-le-Clerc and la Chapelle Marteau provost of Paris—the latter being supposed to act in strict subordination to the archbishop of Lyons—Hennequin, bishop of Rennes, ex-president of the Seize, and Guillaume Rose, bishop of Senlis, a rabid enthusiast. Amongst the minor demagogues were Acarie, Ameline, Sanguin, La Bruyère, Sesnault ex-keeper of the seal of the League, Larchant, and Crucé. Each of these personages believed himself infallible in political *dicta*; each had his faction. The members of the Forty, or late Conseil de l'Union, were for the most part pensioners of Spain, moved by vehement resentment against Mayenne, whose overthrow seemed their chief point of union. The position of the duke de Mayenne was far from an enviable one. His own faction, that of the princes of Lorraine was divided. Madame de Montpensier his once faithful ally, so far entered into the designs of Mendoza, that she was ready to promote the

maître des comptes, a turbulent Leaguer, and was supposed to have inspired most of the fanatical demonstrations of the period. On the first arrival of le Petit Feuillant in the capital, during the late reign, his sermons drew crowds of persons, and so impressed Henri III., that he offered the eloquent monk the bishopric of Nevers, which the latter declined. Le Petit Feuillant ended his life in the Low Countries, as abbot of the wealthy monastery of Orval.

elevation of her nephew M. de Guise, to the throne; and the marriage of the latter with doña Isabel. Madame de Guise, at once devout and volatile, prided herself on her title of *la reine mère;* but was, in reality, swayed by the clear, sharp intellect of her daughter, Louise Marguerite de Lorraine. The duchesse de Mayenne, apathetic like her husband, wept perpetually, bemoaning her past magnificence and luxury; and constantly deprecating the ambitious views of the duke and his kindred. The duchesse de Nemours, mother of the "martyred duke," and his brother Mayenne, swayed by passionate resentment at the treachery which had overthrown the glory of her house, acted in concert with her daughter, de Montpensier. The duke of Lorraine chief of the race, had virtually for a season retired from the contest, offended that Mayenne, during the campaign in Normandy, presumed to take military precedence of the duke de Bar. The duke, it was apprehended, waited only his opportunity to make peace with Henri Quatre; provided that the king offered to the duke de Bar the hand of madame Catherine; or an alliance with the rich heiress of Bouillon.[1]

[1] Charlotte de la Marck, only daughter of Charles de la Marck duke de Bouillon prince de Sedan, and of Françoise de Bourbon-Montpensier. The duchess inherited on the demise of her only brother, Guillaume Robert duke de Bouillon, who died at Geneva in 1588, and, by will, prohibited his sister from

Such were the conflicting interests which gathered under the elastic pretext of zeal for the faith, composed the Great League, when Henri Quatre invested the stronghold of the malcontents—Paris.

On the last day of May, the decease of Charles X. was proclaimed in the thoroughfares of the capital; after which the Parisians were again gratified with a grand procession, in fashion of the one which commemorated the arrival of the legate. The duke de Nemours and the principal personages in Paris appeared. The relics of La Sainte Chapelle and of St. Denis were paraded amid multitudes of flags, banners, and emblems. The procession marched to Nôtre Dame; when each person ascended the steps of the high altar, where the legate sat enthroned, and swore on the gospels never to submit to the prince of Béarn.[1] Ordinances were then issued for the sale of provisions. A baker in each district was appointed, to whom the government agents delivered wheat at four crowns the bushel; on condition that he retailed the bread made

espousing a Roman Catholic. Henri IV. eventually bestowed the hand of mademoiselle de Bouillon on his faithful servant and personal friend Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, viscount de Turenne, who assumed on his marriage the title of duke de Bouillon.

[1] This title was given to the king to please Philip II. and his ambassador Mendoza, as the king of Spain was *de facto* king of Upper Navarre.

therefrom at the rate of thirty *deniers* the pound. Meanwhile, to inflame religious enthusiasm, it was resolved to place the city under the protection of an ecclesiastical militia, composed of the monks, priests, abbés, and wandering fanatics congregated in the capital. The proposal was made to the duke de Nemours by a deputation of priests, on Saturday, June 2nd, in the great hall of the Augustinian monastery, where he often held council. This ridiculous and grotesque device was actually sanctioned by the authorities. "Posterity," says de Thou, "will scarcely believe that which I cannot myself indite without laughter." The famous penitents of Henry III., with their sacks and rosaries displayed less madness than did these fanatics; who disgraced the dignity of their manhood by despicable buffoonery. A procession ensued, marshalled by Rose bishop of Senlis, and the prior of the Cistercians; who each brandished in one hand a crucifix, in the other a halberd. Then followed the ecclesiastics of Paris, marching four abreast, armed with pikes. Next came the priors of the Capuchins, Feuillantines, Franciscans, Dominicans, and Carmelites, followed by their monks, each man bearing a crucifix and being armed either with a halberd, arquebuse, partisan, dagger, or a sword. Their monastic habits were tucked up to the waist, to

display a military uniform beneath. Most of the ecclesiastics wore cuirasses of steel; and some helmets with plumes. "The old monks," says de Thou, an eye-witness of the scene, "marched with a pretended menacing gait, their eyes rolling with fury, and gnashing their teeth; imitating, as well as they were able, the attitudes and gestures of warriors. The more juvenile monks followed these, armed with arquebuses, which they occasionally discharged, without intending it, at the head of some unfortunate spectator." The bishop of Senlis called himself "captain" of these fanatics; the curé Hamilton was their sergeant; and as they passed along the streets, he marshalled the procession, and gave out the tunes of the hymns intoned during the progress.[1]

The legate, meantime, informed of these proceedings, greatly lauded the pious fervour of the ecclesiastics; and ordered his coach, that he might witness the spectacle. Gaëtano was accompanied by Panigarola bishop elect of Asti, by his secretary, and by the Jesuit Bellarmine. The legate drove to the corner of a street in the line of march, and directed his coach to be drawn up close to the houses, so as

[1] De Thou, liv. 98. Le Grain, Vie d'Henri le Grand, liv. v. Mathieu.—L'Etoile, Journal de Henri IV., année, 1590. Cayet, Chron. Nov. Dupleix.

to allow as much space as possible for the passage of the procession.[1] As soon as the ecclesiastics perceived the legate, they shouted in transport, and fired their arquebuses with so frantic an aim that a discharge entered through the windows of the cardinal's coach, and killed the secretary who was sitting by his side. The legate, thereupon, in great alarm, made prompt retreat; and returned to his lodgings without allowing investigation to be made concerning the condition of the wounded man. This accident created much excitement. The panic, however, was partly allayed by a declaration from the legate to the effect, "that, inasmuch as his defunct secretary had met his death while witnessing a holy and ravishing spectacle, it were sin to doubt that his soul had ascended straight to beatitude!" The same evening, a party of royalist cavalry was attacked and driven from the faubourg Montmartre by the chevalier d'Aumale. This advantage so elated the populace, that a mob invested the houses of two respectable citizens of the party termed Les Politiques, who were known to have advised that peace should be made with the king, and seizing these unfortunate men, the leaders of the rabble caused them to be sewn up in sacks and thrown into the

[1] The legate is represented by all chroniclers as living in fear of his life from the awkward zeal of his partisans in Paris.

Seine by way of example. Afterwards, the people proceeded to the hôtel of madame de Montpensier, and sang beneath the windows of her apartment. The fate of these unhappy men greatly intimidated the Italian priests in the suite of the legate. The Franciscan Panigarola, whose oratorical facility had caused him to be chosen as preacher and domestic chaplain to Gaëtano, moved by the severity of the famine, ventured to say, some ten days subsequently, to the archbishop of Lyons, "that, in his opinion, it would be better to open negotiations with king Henry, than suffer the populace to starve." This speech being reported by some officious medler, Bussy-le-Clerc sent word to Panigarola, "that, unless he publicly recalled that observation, they would also tie him in a sack, and send him floating down the Seine to St. Cloud, where he might lay his propositions before le Béarnnois." In great alarm, therefore, the bishop ascended the pulpit at Nôtre Dame, and contradicted the report that he had counselled submission to the Navarrois. "Such who made the statement are liars—infamous liars and cowards. No! messieurs! I say war to the death! Guerra! guerra!"[1] The spirit of the Parisians was not

[1] Le Grain, Décade de Henri le Grand, liv. iv, p. 350. "Panigarole était obligé d'interrompre son sermon en buvant un grand verre de vin, tant pour se donner des forces, que pour reprendre haleine." Scaligeriania au nom Panigarole.

yet quelled by famine: the king, moreover, had made no serious attack even on the faubourgs of the city. The royal army encircled and blockaded every avenue, it was true; but no military disasters had yet shaken the confidence of the people.

On the 17th of June, the sieur St. Paul captured a boat laden with provisions on the river Marne; and succeeding in passing the outposts of the detachment under Givry, entered Paris in triumph. During the next few days provisions were cheap and plentiful; and the popular arrogance rose in proportion.

During this interval, king Henry, having advantageously posted his army, concentrated his attacks chiefly on the town of St. Denis and on the castle of Vincennes—strongholds of the Union. The king frequently changed his headquarters; and amid the anxieties which beset him, lived on the whole an easy and jovial life. Sometimes his majesty took up his abode in the hotel Gondy at St. Cloud, where Henry III. had expired; at other times he was the guest of the abbess of Chelles, or of the abbess of Maubuisson.[1] Occasionally, Henry journeyed to Senlis

[1] Angélique d'Estrées, abbess of Maubuisson, led the most profligate life; the scandal of the nuns of Maubuisson caused an enquiry to be instituted into their conduct, when the revelations which ensued caused the most painful sensation. The abbess, owing to her favour with the king was not degraded; and moreover retained her position throughout this reign.

to visit madame de Beauvilliers;[1] then he sojourned in the castle of Beaumont, where the charms of mademoiselle des Essars temporarily effaced the recollection of Gabrielle d'Estrées. The principal cavaliers of the royal army imitated their royal master and led joyous lives; with the exception of the marshals de Biron and d'Aumont, La Noue, and Châtillon, whose valour and military knowledge, during the temporary absence of the king, provided for every emergency. M. de Bellegarde, during the month of June, paid a furtive visit to Mantes, where mademoiselle d'Estrées was then sojourning. The duke de Longueville, being at this time sent by the king on a financial mission to Mantes to confer with M. d'O, saw mademoiselle d'Estrées; and, though betrothed to the daughter of the duke de Nevers, likewise lost his heart to this beautiful and captivating coquette. If the marquis de Cœuvres had previously congratulated himself on the prospect of his daughter's marriage with Bellegarde, the proposals of M. de

[1] Marie de Beauvilliers soon afterwards returned voluntarily to her convent, and led a life of zealous devotion. She broke off all alliance with the king, and was consecrated abbess of Montmartre in 1597 at the age of 25. She held this office for 59 years, and died in 1656, in great odour of sanctity.—Antiquités de Montmartre, du P. Léon. Some authors state that she received an offer of marriage from one of the brothers of M. de Rosny which she declined.—Blemur, Eloges des Illustres de l'Ordre de St. Benôit.

Longueville, the hereditary lord high chamberlain of France, and a prince of royal descent, seemed superior, as did the alliance of Bellegarde above that of M. de Villars. M. d'Estrées, however, declined to interfere with the preferences of his daughter, and referred the duke to *la belle Gabrielle.* Mademoiselle d'Estrées, being really attached to Bellegarde, listened incredulously to the suit of M. de Longueville; besides, she knew that the duke was affianced to the eldest daughter of the duke de Nevers. Nevertheless, mademoiselle d'Estrées could not totally repress the exultation inspired by this illustrious conquest; and, without intending positive treason to the duke her affianced, she consented to enter into a platonic correspondence with Longueville, who promised to recount the events of the camp before Paris, whilst she retailed the *on dits* of Mantes. Presuming on the power of her charms, mademoiselle d'Estrées permitted herself many jests and *bon mots* on the susceptible heart of the king, whom she irreverently termed "*Majesté à la barbe grise;*" while she often condescended to quote verses of a vaudeville very popular amongst the royal troopers, in which Henry's numerous conquests were satirically recounted.

Meanwhile, Henry's rebellious lieges of Paris were beginning to feel the chastisement which

they had provoked. On the 20th of June, the public stores of wheat were exhausted. To relieve the distress of the poorer classes, a subscription was opened for the establishment of public soup cauldrons in the streets of certain districts. Meat sold for exorbitant prices. As the dearth increased, the turbulence of the factions augmented. Crowds of starving suppliants hourly besieged the Hôtel de Ville, and pursued the coaches of Mendoza or of the princesses whenever they stirred abroad. La Chapelle Marteau, and the curé Boucher, thereupon called a meeting, and exhorted the people to seek solace in their deplorable extremity by making a vow to present to the shrine of Our Lady of Lorretto, a silver lamp and a ship of the same precious metal, each of the value of thirty marks. The proposition was received with vehement cheers; the persons present fell on their knees, and took oath to accomplish the vow on the raising of the siege.[1] Still further to reassure the public mind, Mendoza drove during the same day through the streets, flinging a small Spanish coin to the populace bearing the effigy of king Philip; he also engaged to give the poor the sum of twenty-six crowns daily.[2] The cardinal-legate, likewise,

[1] Journal de Henri IV.—L'Etoile. Discours véritable et notable du siège de Paris, par Pierre Cornero.

[2] Ibid.

offered contribution by sending his silver plate to be coined into money, reserving for his own use, as he announced, only one silver spoon![1] In the name of pope Sixtus, the cardinal handed a second donation of 50,000 crowns to the authorities for the purchase of provisions. The discontent occasioned great dissensions in the council, of which the archbishop of Lyons, with his energy and eloquent pen, was the presiding genius. The duke de Nemours, young and inexperienced, and puzzled by conflicting counsels, deferred greatly to the prelate's advice. The unconciliating demeanour of the Spanish ambassador increased the difficulties of the crisis. The ambassador, accompanied by Espinac, was passing one day close to the Palais de Justice, when they were beset by a famishing multitude, who clamorously asked for bread or for peace. The archbishop in vain harangued the mob, and Mendoza profusely scattered his coins; overtures which excited turbulent demonstrations and shouts of "Give us bread! This money is useless! We find nothing to buy. Give us bread!"[2] Espinac thereupon summoned the relieving

[1] De Thou. Davila.

[2] "Le même peuple," says Mathieu, "mangeoit de la bouillie, ou plutôt de la cole, qui se vendoit aux carrefours dans de grandes chaudières. Ceux qui en mangèrent devinrent enflés, et crevèrent, quand la liberté leur donna moyen d'avoir de meilleurs aliments."—Règne de Henri IV.

officers of the ward, and commanded a dole of barley bread to be issued. "It was a thing most pitiable to behold the daily increasing distress and misery of the poor," writes an eye-witness. "Some died of starvation in the hospitals; the less fortunate on dunghills, or in the gutters; others, in consequence of insufficient food and its pernicious quality, contracted deadly disorders, or suffered from horrible distension of the body."[1] An assembly of the heads of the ecclesiastical establishments in Paris was convoked at the Hôtel de Ville, on the 25th day of June, in consequence of the rumours prevalent, that large stores of grain and other provisions were accumulated in the monasteries of the capital. Nemours, therefore, proposed that the conventual establishments should feed the poor of Paris during the space of a fortnight; at the expiration of which period deliverance might be at hand from M. de Mayenne. An ecclesiastic present, sullenly observed, "that the brethren of the church must first be consulted, and their wants provided for." Nemours replied, "the necessity was so extreme, that examination must be forthwith made into the condition of the monastic granaries."

The captains of the various wards, therefore,

[1] Discours notable du siège de la ville de Paris.—Mém. de Villeroy, t. ii. Pigafetta, Assedio di Parigi—Roma, 1591.

on the following day paid official visits to most of the convents and monasteries of the capital. They were directed to make estimate of the stores of provisions gathered in the religious houses, and report thereon to the municipal council. This ordinance excited hot indignation amongst the clergy. The rector of the college of Jesuits, Tyrius, accompanied by father Bellarmine, waited upon the legate to pray that his house might, at least, be exempted from the inquisition. Chapelle Marteau happened at the time to be in conference with his eminence. When Tyrius had preferred his petition, the provost angrily retorted, "shame, M. le Recteur; your petition is neither Christian nor politic. Are not all persons known to possess stores of grain compelled to sell at stated prices, at this period of dearth? Why should your house be exempt from that visit to which all others have been compelled submit to? Is your life more valuable than mine?"[1]

The cardinal consequently refused to interfere; and the inspection of the granaries and cellars of the wealthy establishment was made during the afternoon of the 26th of June, precisely six weeks and two days after the commencement of the blockade. An amazing store

[1] Journal du Règne de Henri IV., edited by Pierre l'Etoile, année 1590. Cayet.

of provisions of all kinds greeted the longing eyes of the inspectors. The provident fathers had accumulated corn and biscuit enough to maintain the establishment for the space of one year; there were found, moreover, stores of salted meats, vegetables, and hay. Large accumulations of grain and biscuit were also reported in the monastery of the Capuchins; indeed, the report shows that most of the religious houses had provision in abundance, and more than would suffice for the sustenance of the community for six months. Chapelle Marteau, therefore, issued an *ordonnance*, which was ratified by the council of state, directing that the conventual establishments of the capital should feed the poor of their districts once a day; and that a roll containing the names of the families to be relieved was to be given at each monastery. An order was likewise promulgated, ordering the poor of the various districts to collect their cats and dogs, and deliver them at the monastery from which they respectively obtained relief. In the court of most of the monasteries, the monks, after the issue of this decree, erected large coppers, in which a porridge composed of dog flesh, barley meal, and dried pease, was daily served out to applicants.[1] A few weeks longer,

[1] Relatione dell' assedio di Parigi, di Filippo Pigafetta, 8vo. Roma, 1591.

and the miserable Parisians had longing reminiscences of this unsavoury mess.

The compulsory distribution of the monastic stores having rendered necessaries of all kind more plentiful, the next care of the council of state was to supply the poor with the means of purchasing fuel and other comforts. The pangs of destitution were fast obliterating political partisanship; and such was, at times, the frantic despair of the starving people, that it was seriously apprehended the city might be fired or betrayed. A conference ensued, which was presided over by the legate, when it was resolved to send to the mint the silver and gold plate of the churches in the capital, not actually used for the celebration of mass. The duke de Nemours, also, obtained the assent of the council to melt down the settings of the crown jewels left in the Louvre by Henry III. A golden crucifix, weighing nineteen marks, of exquisite workmanship, and a crown and sceptre of gold, given by one of the monarchs of France to the treasury of St. Denis, were also delivered[1] by the abbot of St.

[1] Journal de Henri IV. L'Etoile. Speaking of the miseries of the people of Paris at this season, another author observes: "Leurs reliques furent trousées, les anciens joyaux de la couronne des roys furent fondus; les fauxbourgs ruinés, la ville devint pauvre et solitaire; les rentes de l'Hôtel de Ville furent amorties—les terres d'alentour en désolation."—Discours sur le siège de Paris, Mém. de la Ligue.

Denis to an agent sent by the duke de Nemours. These donations of precious metal, when coined into money, produced the sum of 847 crowns, which were equally distributed amongst the indigent of the various wards. The households of the princesses also now felt the severity of the famine. Bread was doled out at the rate of half a pound per diem to their retainers, with a few ounces of meat, and wine in proportion. The fierce vindictiveness of the duchesse de Montpensier was not assuaged by privation or by the dreadful spectacles around. Fearlessly she traversed the streets of Paris; sometimes seated alone in her coach; at others, accompanied by the Spanish ambassador, throwing *largesse* to the people whenever faint cheers for the Catholic king greeted Mendoza. Madame de Mayenne lived a life of retirement and prayer, being generally on cold terms with her sister-in-law, whose violence and invectives often caused her unfeigned alarm.

The royal army, meanwhile, at the end of the month of June, received a notable accession of strength. The news of Henry's victory at Ivry, now canvassed all over France, brought numerous adherents. All persons of any political sagacity foresaw the eventual triumph of the king. The toleration accorded to Henry by pope Sixtus; and the open displeasure with which

his holiness alluded to the position of his nuncio shut up with the rebels in Paris, was a fact very adverse to the prosperity of the malcontents. Had the life of Sixtus been prolonged, many of the subsequent *tracasseries* doubtless would have been obviated. But the crowning act of Henry's recognition by his great nobles, was the arrival of the duke de Nevers in camp at the head of five hundred horse. During the preceding reign, the duke de Nevers—a Gonzaga—presuming on his rank as heir-presumptive of the duchy of Mantua, aspired to act a neutral part between Henry III., the League, and its captain, Guise. The duke had a tender conscience; he was rigidly orthodox; and venerated, as his interest dictated, supreme and arbitrary sovereign power. As a dutiful son of the church, his sympathies had gone with the League in its alleged zeal to transmit the crown to an orthodox successor to Henry III. Nevertheless, as to take up arms against the anointed king was treason—a crime abhorred by the duke—he retired altogether from the contest, as the Holy See refused, until after the union of Henry III. with Henri de Navarre, to issue either Bull or monitory declaring the cause of the Leaguers holy and legitimate. The murder of the late king; the incompetence of the generals of the Union; and the violence done to the

principle of legitimate succession by the proclamation of Charles X., confirmed the duke in his resolve to remain neutral. He had, however, on several occasions testified personal *bienveillance* for the king; and had lent him the considerable sum of 33,000 gold crowns to pursue his levies in Germany. The victory of Ivry, so rapid and complete, added to the dying exhortations of the deceased cardinal de Bourbon, at length induced the duke de Nevers to offer his services to his royal master while such proffered aid might be valued. He, accordingly, sent an envoy to Henry in the person of Mario de Birague, son of the deceased cardinal-chancellor Birague, to express to his majesty his admiration of his valour and benevolence; and his disgust at the conduct of the legate, who, in defiance of his instructions from Rome, openly espoused the Spanish faction. He, therefore, inspired by loyal zeal, wished to unite with his majesty in annihilating the factions, whose aim was clearly the dismemberment of the realm. Henry gave cordial reception to the duke's envoy, and entertained Birague magnificently at St. Cloud. During the following week, Nevers himself arrived in camp, attended by a troop of nobles and retainers magnificently accoutred.[1] The prince de Conti, also, after

[1] Mém. du duc de Nevers, edited by Gomberville. De Thou —Davila—Sully, vol. i.

recapturing Charenton, brought the king levies from Poitou, Anjou, and Maine. The greatest accession of strength, and the most joyful *rencontre* for the king was the arrival of his old friend and tried servant Turenne, at the head of four thousand troops of the line and one thousand horse. These succours were levied in Guyenne, and from Henry's patrimony of Béarn. The men were mostly of lofty stature, brave, devoted to their prince, and ready to lay down their lives in his service. When these hardy soldiers saw their king, they gathered round him; some kissing his hand; others clinging to the folds of his cloak, and weeping even in the transport of their enthusiasm. Le Béarnnois felt his throne secure when supported by such valiant hearts and loyal prowess. Letters also reached king Henry, at this period, from his constant friend, queen Elizabeth, expressive of her majesty's admiration of *la Journée d'Ivry;* and commenting with great dissatisfaction on the proceedings of the duke de Mercœur in Bretagne, who had opened the most important ports of that province to a Spanish fleet. The queen, also, announced the speedy arrival of the earl of Essex, and a *corps* of English auxiliaries to aid his majesty in purging his realm from such "pestiferous rebels." Elizabeth, however, candidly stated that one of her objects in sending

this succour was, that the king might chase the rebels from his maritime provinces opposite to the English coasts, which she prayed him to accomplish. Intelligence also arrived that the duke d'Epernon, at length roused from inactivity by his dread lest the king might now begin to reckon neutral friends as foes, suddenly took the resolve to assume the offensive in Provence against the pretensions of the duke de Savoye, and the other claimants of fiefs within that fair province.[1] The duke left madame d'Epernon at Angoulême; giving her strict injunctions not to pay her *devoirs* during his absence to her feudal suzerain, king Henry.

The king at this period, moreover, came to the sagacious resolution of recalling the chancellor de Cheverny, who had been so summarily deprived of office by the late king, under the supposition that the chancellor was devoted to the will of queen Catherine and the duke de Guise. Cheverny sprang from *la haute noblesse*; he was opulent, able in legal lore, of unshaken in-

[1] "Epernon," says Sully, "ne connoissait qu'une marche—la hauteur avec laquelle il prétendoit tout emporter. Il haissoit le roy parcequ'il haissoit tout le monde; et sans doute il y avoit bien des moments où il ne s'accommodoit pas trop avec lui-même." Livre 5ème. The duke de Sully is especially hard in his comments on the celebrated favourite of Henri III. The letters of cardinal d'Ossat, however, prove that Epernon corresponded with the Spanish Cabinet at this period. Lettres du cardinal d'Ossat, edited by Amelot de la Houssaye.

tegrity, and of deportment so dignified, that *le port de prince* of M. le Chancelier had been proverbial during the late reign. On the accesssion of Henry, the great seal had first been intrusted to the cardinal de Vendôme—as M. de Montholon immediately resigned the office of lord-keeper, which he had unwillingly assumed before the meeting of the States of Blois. As it was necessary that the most important edicts issued by the king should have the great seal affixed, Henry commanded that it should temporarily be deposited with the secretary of state, Beaulieu, who followed his majesty. Beaulieu, however, not being skilled in the fundamental laws of the realm, soon proved himself incompetent for the office. The seals were then placed in commission between M. d'O and the marshal de Biron. The valiant soldier and the acute financier failed in the duty imposed on them; and their knowledge of jurisprudence being limited, they often ignorantly sealed documents containing clauses opposed to the established codes of law. Besides, the greatest dissension prevailed between Biron and M. d'O; and the king, after listening to a long wrangle between the two, was often inexpressibly provoked on perusing the edict in question, to detect flaws which would have furnished high delectation to his rebels of the privy council of the Union. His

majesty, therefore, wisely decided on recalling Cheverny; and sent the brother-in-law of the latter, the historian de Thou, to invite the chancellor to resume office. Cheverny returned a hearty assent; delighted to emerge from his luxurious retreat at the château d'Eclimont, and to participate again in public affairs. Henry received the chancellor with gracious affability at Aubervilliers during the month of July, 1590. "M. le Chancelier," said his majesty facetiously, as he placed the seals in the hand of Cheverny, "behold these two pistols of the law, with which I command you to do me good service. Formerly you used them against myself. I, however, pardon you. Serve me as you served the late king my brother, and I will favour you as much, and more than did his late majesty. In return, attach yourself to me, and believe that venerating as I do your tried ability, I will listen to your counsels as to those of a father, or of a well-beloved tutor."[1] These flattering expressions bound the chancellor for ever to the king's service. Henry ever asked Cheverny's advice, and, what was more, generally acted on the council given: while the legal knowledge and integrity of the chancellor, added to his thorough knowledge of all branches

[1] Mém. de Messire Philippe Henault, comte de Cheverny, chancelier de France. De Thou liv. 99.

of the executive, materially aided the royal cause.

The town of St. Denis, meanwhile, which had bravely withstood the persevering assaults of the enemy, was reduced to the last extremities of famine. On the day that Cheverny arrived at Aubervilliers, the commandant of the garrison sent word to the duke de Nemours that his capitulation was inevitable, unless relieved by a timely succour of ammunition and of food. Nemours, who was daring and enterprising, devised a scheme to relieve the famine, which was destroying more men than the royal assaults. He selected thirty bold troopers, who quitted Paris at nightfall, each with a sack of meal attached to his saddle, and crept under the shadow of the walls in the direction of St. Denis. To divert the attention of the enemy, the chevalier d'Aumale made a *sortie* into the faubourg St. Antoine. Half of Nemours' soldiers found their way to St. Denis; the rest were either captured or went boldly to the nearest royalist picket, and offered to serve the king. The relation made by the soldiers to their comrades in St. Denis of the desperate condition of affairs in Paris, so alarmed the garrison, that on the following day proposals of surrender were made to the king. Henry, sensible of the advantages likely to accrue from the possession of

St. Denis, accepted the articles of capitulation presented. The garrison, therefore, marched from the town in battle array, and was conducted in safety without the royal camp.[1] The same day, the town of Dammartin surrendered to Charles de la Marck, count de Maulevrier. The royal forces, however, met with a repulse before Vincennes; the siege of which fortress was nevertheless pursued with vigour.

Meanwhile, the dearth and misery became so extreme in the beleaguered city that the legate proposed a conference with M. de Pisani, a nobleman who had recently returned from Rome, where he held the post of ambassador during the late reign. Accordingly the cardinal-legate wrote to the king, requesting that M. de Pisani might give him the rendezvous at the hôtel de Gondy in the suburbs. Henry, whose benevolent nature deplored the condition of his citizens of Paris reduced to such extremity by blind passion and by the malignant intrigues of their leaders, granted the passport demanded. The interview took place on the 10th of July. The hôtel de Gondy was esteemed neutral ground. The duke de Retz, after deserting his benefactor, the late king, had sought refuge during the troubles in Florence, where, feigning abject

[1] Corneio.—Discours véritable des choses arrivées au siège mémorable de la renommée ville de Paris. De Thou.

decrepitude, he entered a monastery as a boarder, and refused to admit any stranger to his presence.[1] His affairs in France were administered by his wife[2] and his brother, Gondy, cardinal-bishop of Paris. Madamè de Retz was learned and able; and, like the cardinal her brother-in-law, she recognized Henry's legal claim to the crown; but refused her allegiance, except to a Catholic and orthodox monarch. Cardinal de Gondy, therefore, received favour in his episcopal capacity, both from the king and the League; and was suffered to enter and retire from the capital at pleasure. Gaëtano's proposition to the marquis de Pisani[3] demonstrated that the miseries of the citizens, and the forbearance of the king, who had as yet refrained from any assault on the city, were little appreciated. He came, attended only by Séga bishop of Placentia and by Bellarmine, and proposed that hostilities should cease, and the disposal of the crown be referred to his holiness! Pisani, who was a statesman prompt and acute, peremptorily de-

[1] The duke returned to France again in the year 1594, having, as he said, miraculously recovered the use of his limbs, at the head of a body of Swiss troops which he enlisted for the service of the king.

[2] Claude Catherine de Clermont, daughter of the baron de Dampierre. Her first husband was the maréchal d'Annebaut.

[3] Jean de Vivonne, seigneur de St. Gouard, marquis de Pisani, sénéchal de Xaintonge.

clined to be the bearer of such proposals. The legate smiled, and then commenced a discourse on the affairs of Rome, and put many pertinent questions respecting the declining health of pope Sixtus, and the intrigues of the Spanish faction of the conclave. It was afterwards supposed that Gaëtano had alone proposed the interview, to gain authentic intelligence from the marquis as to the state of parties in Rome.

During the few hours of this suspension of arms, many of the cavaliers of the royal army contrived to convey presents of provisions to their relatives and friends in the city, whose recitals moved intense compassion. The duke de Nevers, M. de Givry and others sent gifts to the princesses; a licence connived at by the king, whose generous heart was moved by the terrible sufferings of the people. Aid even from the religious houses in Paris had ceased; the streets swarmed with cadaverous objects, whose wild delirium and savage fury while contending for the possession of the vilest offal, rendered it dangerous to pass through the streets unarmed.[1] All the horses, mules, and cattle of every description in Paris, were devoured before

[1] Discours véritable et notable du siège de Paris, Villeroy, p. 379. Mathieu, Règne de Henri IV. "Les pauvres mangeoient chiens, chats, des rats, des feuilles de vigne, et autres herbes cuites sans sel.—Corneio. Pigafetta, Assedio de Parigi—Pigafetta was an Italian in the suite of the legate Gaëtano.

the middle of the month of July. The legate, the Spanish ambassador, and the princesses sent their horses to the slaughter-houses. The dead and the dying filled the streets; for the pestiferous atmosphere of the houses of the poor caused them to be deserted. The soup cauldrons, which in some of the streets were yet maintained by donations from the authorities, were filled with loathsome snbstances, such as the exuviæ of animals, mice, rats, leather; even human blood mingled in the horrible compound. Little cakes were exposed for sale, made of rye mingled with powdered slate; white bread sold for a gold crown a pound; butter for three crowns a pound; eggs for twelve sous a-piece. "I have seen with my own eyes," says Pigafetta, "many wretches devouring raw dog-flesh and the entrails of beasts which had been flung into the gutter. On one occasion, I witnessed the furious combat of a man with a savage dog, which he had attacked to devour. The dog threw down the man who was famishing, and began to tear and eat his flesh, when the shouts and blows of other miserable wretches drove the brute from his prey." It was a common event in the morning to find two hundred corpses in the streets.[1] Little children and women perished in numbers

[1] One hundred thousand persons are supposed to have perished during the three months of the siege.

from the combined miseries of famine and pestilence. The streets echoed with the groans and the agonies of the dying. The plaints and lamentations of the miserable multitudes, houseless, and exposed to horrible assaults, broke on the stillness of the night; and caused the fanatics —the cause of the war—to tremble in their beds. Amid these terrible scenes, processions of relics continually passed—the priests of the capital pronouncing the victims very blessed, martyrs, the elect of heaven! The fierce enthusiasm of these fanatics found response in the the hearts of the people, even in the midst of sufferings so appalling. On the 24th day of July, a favourite waiting-woman of madame de Montpensier died of famine in the hôtel of the duchess. Six ounces of bread and a handful of herbs was now the daily fare of the late pampered hirelings of the great nobles in Paris. A few days after this catastrophe occurred, M. d'Orlan, cousin-german to Chapelle Marteau, fell sick of the fever which raged in Paris. His physicians pronounced his malady mortal, excepting one of the doctors, who declared that broth seasoned with the precious elixir of the brain of a dog, might prove a useful restorative! Search was made for a dog; but in vain. "The German troops in Paris," says de Thou, "soon rendered these animals scarce. They watched at the

corners of the streets, and caught all the dogs that passed with a noose; then, without further delay, they devoured the flesh and sold the skins." Madame de Montpensier, however, had a little dog of the rare breed so prized by the deceased king, upon which she lavished many endearments. To save his cousin's life, Chapelle Marteau waited upon the duchess, and offered her a casket of precious rings and chains, in exchange for her dog. "If you had asked me in aid of your cousin for all my influence with those in power, believe, monsieur, that you should have been welcome. But as for my little dog, I keep him for my private consolation. The famine will, ere long, slay us all, unless the king of Spain hastens his succours; and it may be that I myself shall need my dog as much as you tell me your cousin does. You must, therefore, excuse me to him."[1] About the same time, a horrible fact came to light. A lady of rank who had lost two children during the siege, stole the bodies from the coffins, which she afterwards filled with rubbish and caused to be interred. She then salted the bodies, and every day ate a morsel of the flesh, and gave a piece to her servant.[2]

[1] Corneio. L'Etoile, Journal de Henri IV. Brief traité des misères de la ville de Paris, t. iv, Mém de la Ligue. De Thou.

[2] Ibid—Pigafetta, Assedio de Parigi in Roma, 1591.

On the 23rd of July, the mortality and famine increasing, several unfortunate individuals threw themselves during the night headlong from the ramparts into the fosse below; and were taken up wounded and insensible by the royal sentinels. On coming to themselves again, the men said, "that they had taken the desperate resolution, on purpose to cast themselves at the feet of the king, to petition him to have mercy on their misery and to permit a certain number of persons to quit the city!" By command of the marshal d'Aumont—before whom these individuals made an exact relation of the torments they had suffered, and recounted the tyranny of the Seize—they were escorted to St. Cloud, where Henry was sojourning. On hearing this piteous recital, tears fell from the eyes of the king. Raising his hands, his majesty protested "that he was not the author of such calamities, being willing to receive and pardon the Parisians; but that their oppressors in Paris wished to give the realm to the Spanish king." The poor supplicants were bountifully fed, whilst the council assembled to debate on their petition. Many of the chief nobles joined in imploring Henry not to push to extremity this rigorous siege. Paris, it was boldly asserted, must eventually succumb: the army of Mayenne imprisoned in the environs of Laon and Cam-

bray, in vain waited the great Spanish succour, which after encountering the army of the king, alone could avert the fall of Paris. Not one of Henry's council, including the king, believed that the duke of Parma would in person invade the realm. This conviction, added to the prompting of Henry's noble and generous nature prevailed: the king desired to compel the surrender of Paris, but not to destroy his capital and to extirpate its inhabitants. He remembered, moreover, that the city contained numbers of peasants from the adjacent districts, who had been compelled by agents of the League to aid in replenishing the public stores, and in strengthening the fortifications. Passports were consequently granted by the king, against the advice of Cheverny, M. de Rosny, and the marshal d'Aumont, empowering three thousand persons to quit the capital. On the pass, it was specified that women and children, students at the colleges, peasants, and ecclesiastics not belonging to the Seize, would alone be suffered to leave the faubourgs.

The following morning, July 24th, between three and four thousand persons quitted Paris. The sight of the haggard and attenuated forms of the poor creatures liberated, profoundly affected the king. He caused a sum of money to be distributed; and dismissed them according to

his promise. The same day, emboldened by the clemency shown by the king, a second company of starving wretches forced a way from the city through the porte St. Victor, and penetrated beyond the faubourgs. Some brought clothes, furniture and valuables, to exchange with the soldiers for bread—all being ready to barter their whole substance for liberty, or for the slightest present relief. Henry gave orders that food should be distributed; and it was only on the urgent remonstrance of his officers, that he resisted the piteous entreaty of the poor citizens that they might also be conducted out of camp. They re-entered the city however, many laden with bags of corn, bread, and meat; and related to their friends the benevolent treatment which they had experienced by order of his majesty.[1] This relation disabused the people a little, and opened their eyes to the infamous fabrications of the priests.

At the royal council, another important resolution had been taken. The king, depending on the intelligence he had heard that the duke de Mayenne was still occupied in securing the co-operation of his Spanish allies; and encouraged by the report of the dissensions and desolation in the city, resolved that night to attack the

[1] They returned to the city, shouting, "Ou la paix, ou du pain; Vive le Roy!"

faubourgs so as still more closely to press the siege. The nobles present applauded. Henry, therefore, assigned the conduct of the attack on the faubourgs St. Martin, St. Denis, and St. Honoré to Biron. M. de St. Luc was to surprise Montmartre. D'Aumont led the assault on the faubourg St. Germain; while to Châtillon with his brave Huguenots, Henry gave the command of the force destined to storm the faubourgs St. Jacques, St. Michel, St. Marceau, and St. Victor. The greatest secrecy was observed: the generals silently made their dispositions. After supper, the king repaired to the abbey of Montmartre, accompanied by Duplessis-Mornay, Beaulieu, Alibour his surgeon-major, and M. de Rosny. The assault commenced precisely at midnight, by a general attack on the fortifications of the faubourgs. The bells in the town thereupon commenced to peal; the great bell of the Palais tolled; and the sound of the cannonade soon aroused the citizens of Paris. "Never," says Sully, "have I since witnessed so striking a spectacle: clouds of dense smoke, from which issued sparks and glittering flames of fire, gave us first the illusion of being buried in an abyss of darkness, then of being plunged in a sea of fire. Added to this, the din of artillery, the shouts and screams of the combatants, combined to complete the horrors of the scene." The Germans

of the garrison of Paris fought bravely and well; but the depression of the French soldiers was so great, that when their assailants attacked them man to man, the majority threw down their arms and fled back to the gates of the city. The attack lasted two hours: at the end of that time, the faubourgs were in the hands of the royalists; not an enemy appeared—and the victorious soldiery encamped within the very entrenchments so valiantly won.[1] The following day, the king caused a strong guard to be placed before each of the gates of the town; and ordered a battery to be erected so as to command the porte St. Honoré, which greatly harassed the besieged. Henry also visited the faubourg St. Honoré, and entered the gardens of the Tuileries, which at this period were without the city walls. His majesty surveyed, it is recorded, with melancholy emotion the palace, the abode of the late queen Catherine; but which had been converted into a temporary hospital for the sick and wounded.

The king then rode to Chaillot, where he received an express informing him that Mayenne had moved his head quarters from Soissons to La Ferté. The duke, however, still

[1] Discours de ce qui s'est passé en l'armée du roy depuis le 23me Juillet, jusques au 7me d'Aoust, 1590—à Tours, chez Mettayer. De Thou, Cayet, Mathieu, Sully, vol. i. Davila, Péréfixe, Le Grain.

displayed reluctance to leave the shelter of his entrenchments; and waited, as he said, for the junction of the entire Spanish army to drive the heretic usurper from France.

The deepest despair reigned in Paris; the capture of the faubourgs augmented the severity of the blockade. No tidings arrived from Mayenne; and the people, tired of endless processions and services, and driven frantic by the increase of the pestilence, assembled tumultuously before the Palais and demanded relief from the Chambers; or that peace should be concluded. In vain the members present spoke soothingly; and even read aloud a letter said to have been written by Mayenne from Péronne, in which the duke spoke of his prompt approach to raise the siege, supported by the legions of the Catholic king. The people still clamoured, "*la paix, ou du pain! vive le roy!*" and threatened to batter the doors of La Chambre Dorée, within which the members were assembled. Arms were produced; and from all parts of Paris the people hurried to take part in the fray. On the rumour of the tumult, Goas captain of the ward, a vehement partisan of the Seize, appeared. Approaching the leaders of the mob, he made as if he would eject them from the hall; upon this a sword flashed, and a well-aimed blow severed the right arm of Goas. The people, with

shouts of defiance, then pressed forwards towards La Chambre Dorée, where many members of the Seize sat in trembling apprehension. Fortunately for them, the duke de Nemours and the chevalier d'Aumale with a troop of German soldiers appeared, and surrounding the Palais, arrested the leaders of the mob and conveyed them to the nearest prison where they were immediately hanged.[1] By such, prompt severity the tumult was subdued,—the people were intimidated; but their deportment was so sullen and defiant, that a council was immediately assembled to consider whether it would not be expedient to make overtures of negotiation to king Henry. Indeed, many districts of the city were by this time depopulated; the inhabitants being either dead or starving along the great thoroughfares, their houses falling to ruin, and swarming with noxious reptiles generated from the surrounding corruption and malaria. The public misery was so great, that at length the knot of turbulent demagogues began to tremble for their own lives; besides, the cardinal-legate impatiently endured his long detention in Paris. The expected demise of the supreme pontiff and the subsequent conclave, now occupied the ambitious aspirings of

[1] Mathieu, livre 1. p. 49, et seq. De Thou liv. 98.—Journal de Henri IV.

the prelate, to the exclusion of his *protegés* of the Seize. In an assembly, therefore, of the most notable personages in Paris, it was at length unanimously resolved to send a deputation "to the king of Navarre to propose some mode of accommodation, notwithstanding the decree of the Sorbonne: and that the cardinal bishop of Paris Gondy, and the archbishop of Lyons be deputed accordingly."

The following day, August 3rd, these two prelates presented themselves before the parliament of Paris to state, "to their great regret, considering the sentence of excommunication launched by his holiness against the king of Navarre, they could not accept the mission to confer with that said prince." The legate then rose, and announced his resolve to summon a council of ecclesiastics to examine the question. Gaëtano thereupon sent missives to Tyrius rector of the Jesuits, to Bellarmine his trusty casuist, and to Panigarola the Franciscan, and laid before them the following questions:— "Whether the Parisians, being reduced to the last straits of hunger, would incur excommunication as abettors of the heretic prince, Henri le Navarrois, should they surrender to the said prince? also, whether those deputed to confer with the said prince on matters concerning his abjuration, or relative to the privileges of the

Gallican church, were amenable to the penalties of the said anathema?"[1] As the learned doctors unanimously replied to these propositions in the negative, the mission was finally accepted by the cardinal-archbishop of Paris and by the archbishop of Lyons, whom the late king used pleasantly to term "the brain of the League and the quintessence of faction!"

On the same day, August 4th, Gondy and the archbishop therefore wrote to king Henry "humbly praying that his majesty would be pleased to send them safe conducts, as it was their intention to proceed to St. Denis, there to lay before him the sentiments of the town of Paris." The king replied by the same envoy; and despatched a passport to admit the prelates on the morrow, to conference in the abbey of St. Antoine, "where they might speak at leisure with his majesty." The duchesse de Mayenne likewise wrote to the king, describing the desolation of the once flourishing capital; she also prayed that a safe conduct might be granted to her envoy, who was also charged to deliver a missive to her husband,

[1] "Utrum reddentes urbem heretico Principi, ob necessitatem famis, sint excommunicati; utrum, adventum principem hereticum, ut eum convertant vel ut conditionem Ecclesiæ catholicæ faciant meliorem, incurrant excommunicationem bullâ Sixti Quinti." Sur ce les susdits docteurs respondirent, "negativé, quòd non incurrant."

the duke, at La Ferté. Madame de Mayenne wrote as follows:—

THE DUCHESSE DE MAYENNE TO MONSEIGNEUR LE DUC DE MAYENNE.

"Monsieur:—You are doubtless aware that we have not been hitherto permitted to send envoys to your camp, it being decreed that this town must make separate composition, before a general treaty is concluded with yourself as it is said; also, that if within this week we do not accept the terms about to be offered to us, we are to expect the rigour and castigation the most cruel enemy might inflict. Monsieur, the hearts of all here fail them from the dire miseries which we experience; and it is all that we can do to hold out during this said week. Monsieur, if by this period M. le duc de Parme has not joined you, in the name of God, deceive us not, but send us precise instructions as to what we are to do! We need indeed more than words; alas, if we obey you perhaps we are lost! Reflect, monsieur; what advantage will our destruction bring you? as for myself, I freely offer you my life; nevertheless, pity the children I have borne you, who without fault of their own, are involved in our horrible misfortunes. Believe, believe, that we are lost if you do not succour us within the period I state! If you deem this impossible, inform me without loss of time what I am to do. Delay not! No extenuations will be accepted; but all the evil and calamity will fall principally on those nearest allied to you. Monsieur, I conjure you, think what fate may be ours! God help us all! Written this 3rd day of August, 1590.[1]

"HENRIETTE DE SAVOYE VILLARS."

A few days previous to the resolution taken by the legislators of the League to appeal to the clemency of the king, the duke de Nemours on

[1] Lettre de madame de Mayenne à monseigneur le duc de Mayenne.—Discours de ce qui s'est passé, en l'armée du roy de depuis le 23 Juillet jusques au 7me d'Aoust, 1590. Chez Jamet Mettayer, à Tours, 1590.

going abroad early one morning, met a man, who with pale and terrified aspect, threw himself at the duke's feet. "Monseigneur!" exclaimed he, "I conjure you to turn back! down lower in this said street is a horrible spectacle. A woman at the point of death wrestling with a serpent, which is coiled round her neck!" The duke, thereupon, returned to his hôtel, and sent to ascertain the truth of the statement, which was confirmed. Wondering what such portents boded, Nemours summoned Panigarola and Bellarmine, and asked their sentiments on the incident. Panigarola gravely responded, "Monseigneur, our opinion is, that this incident is a delusion of the Evil One, who essays to daunt your courage, and to tempt you to yield this town to the accursed heretic at our gates! I say to you, that it will be better for us to be devoured alive by foul reptiles than to surrender. Preserve then, monseigneur, this city with its illustrious garrison for his Catholic majesty, who, doubt not, will send us speedy and permanent relief."[1]

[1] Corneio. Mém. de la Ligue t. iv. Journal de Henri IV. L'Etoile.

CHAPTER IV.

1590.

Siege of Paris.—Conferences at the abbey of St. Antoine.—Debates in the Palais—Interview with the king.—Henry announces his ultimatum.—The ladies of Paris appear on the ramparts during the armistice.—The duke de Bellegarde and mademoiselle de Guise.—Return of the ambassadors to Paris.—Disappointment of the populace.—Public anguish and misery.—Letter of king Henry to M. de Nemours.—Discontent of the duchess de Mayenne.—Philip II. orders the duke of Parma to aid the military operations of the League.—Reluctance of Parma.—The cardinal de Gondy and the archbishop of Lyons visit M. de Mayenne at Meaux.—Negotiation of the ambassadors.—They return to the royal Camp.—Treachery of Mayenne.—The king refuses to change his religion.—Entry into France of the duke of Parma.—His march.—Henry holds a council of war.—Resolves to raise the siege of Paris, and march to meet the invaders.—Pecuniary annoyances of the king.—M. d'O.—King Henry raises the siege of Paris, and encamps at Chelles.—Advance of Parma.—His stratagem to avoid a battle.—Parma surveys the royal army.—Henry resolves to divide his army.—Reasons of the king.—Gabrielle d'Estrées.—Violent passion of the king.—He forbids her union with Bellegarde, and exiles the duke.—Anger of mademoiselle d'Estrées.—Her interviews with the king.—She retires to the château de Cœuvres.—Parma visits Paris.—Capture of Corbeil.—March of the duke back to the Flemish frontier.—His dissatisfaction.—Discord between the dukes.—Recapture of Corbeil.—Reply of Parma to a deputa-

tion of Parisians.—King Henry pursues the Spanish army.—Skirmish of Pont-Avere.—Sojourn of the king at La Fère.—He visits the château de Cœuvres.—Mademoiselle d'Estrées.—Incidents of the interview.—Action of l'Arbre de Guise.—Defeat of the Spaniards.—The dukes of Parma and Mayenne take leave on the frontier.—Triumphal entry of Henry IV. into St. Quentin.

EARLY during the morning of Sunday, August 5th, the principal nobles assembled at St. Denis to escort the king to the abbey of St. Antoine, where the deputies from Paris were to be admitted to audience. The abbey was situated about a mile from the porte St. Antoine.[1] The king arrived between the hours of eight and nine, and held council in the refectory of the nuns. His majesty was attended by the count de Soissons, the chancellor de Cheverny, the dukes de Nevers, de Longueville, and de Bellegarde, the marshals de Biron and d'Aumont, commanders-in-chief. Turenne also accompanied his royal master to this important interview. De Rosny, the future duc de Sully, likewise followed—keen, intelligent, reserved, and sarcastically noting the lavish personal adornments and indiscreet revelations of M. d'O, Henry's minister of finance. There was also present the baron de Biron, a young nobleman greatly favoured by

[1] L'abbaye de St. Antoine des Champs, couvent des Filles Repenties, was founded in 1208, by Fouquet de Nully. The abbey was of the Cistercian order.

Henry, but whose rash bravery and unbridled tongue continually involved his royal master in difficulties. Biron, however, was generous and merry in converse: fearless of peril as his royal master himself; and, what was more in Henry's esteem, he was the son of the marshal de Biron, who first bent the knee in recognition of his sovereignty after the demise of Henry III. The count d'Auvergne, the son of Charles IX. and Marie Touchet, mingled in the royal cortége; also Châtillon, Givry, Pardaillan-Ségur, the secretaries of state Beaulieu and Revol, and a suite of gentlemen and officers which exceeded a thousand personages. The attire of his majesty on this occasion was magnificent, and adopted at the express recommendation of Cheverny and the duke de Nevers; who well remembered the effect produced by the majestic presence of the late king despite of his unpopularity and misgovernment. Henry wore his sumptuous apparel with royal ease; while his kingly aspect and deportment enchanted the courtiers of the late reign, who had seldom seen his majesty arrayed other than in his pourpoint of faded olive green velvet. The collar and badge of the order of St. Esprit was worn by the king. A cluster of diamonds clasped the plume of his hat; and on his finger, Henry wore a diamond of immense value engraved with magical characters, which

had been taken from the hand of the deceased king by the duke d'Epernon and presented to his successor. Between the hours of twelve and one o'clock a great discharge of artillery from the Bastille and the arsenal heralded the approach of the ambassadors. The salute and ceremony observed, seemed so ludicrous to Henry's courtiers that their mirth, at first, was irrepressible. The horrible recitals of the miseries of the Parisians, however, as recounted by the inhabitants of the faubourgs, had kindled the strongest indignation against the turbulent factions of the city.

From dawn on the morning of the 5th of August, the city of Paris was filled with commotion. The streets were thronged with haggard women and children, praying before the images of the Virgin that the mission of the deputies might be successful. Processions perambulated the streets to offer the same petition before the shrines of the capital. Many of the miserable persons thus assembled fell dead on their way from exhaustion or pestilence. Torches were no longer carried in these processions, for tallow, oil, and grease sold for the same weight in gold.[1] Deputations of citizens sought audiences of the

[1] "Et avec cela je veis beaucoup de fois manger de l'oing de quoy on fait de la chandelle, et servoit de pain à manger aux pauvres." Bref discours du siège de Paris.—Pierre Corneio.

princesses, to ask their intervention with the duke de Nemours. Some persons, more hardy than their fellows, ventured to raise the cry of "Vive le roy!" These individuals were, however, instantly seized by the myrmidons of the Seize ever prowling about the streets, and conveyed to prison.

The principal members of the ex-council of the Forty, meantime, assembled and protested against the "treasonable overtures" about to be made to Le Navarrois;[1] and with terrible menaces against Mayenne and the existing council, they took oath on a fragment of the true Cross never to submit to the prince de Béarn; and to seek, by all methods, the extirpation of the duke de Mayenne, his adherents, and of the faction prepared eventually to acknowledge the royal title of Henri Quatre. The majority of the priests of the capital—those compromised in the outrages perpetrated since *La Journée des Barricades*—applauded this resolution, and pronounced it holy, and therefore lawful. The Spanish ambassador was immediately informed

[1] During the conference, Mathieu states that the fanatic Bussy-le-Clerc, was with difficulty prevented from discharging the artillery of the Bastille—of which fortress Bussy was governor—upon the ambassadors and their suite, and upon all the traitors congregated to witness and applaud the pageant and its consequent overtures for peace. Liv. i, p. 49. Hist. de Henri IV.

of these proceedings—intelligence which Mendoza received before he repaired to the Palais, where, in the Salle de St. Louis the members of the executive were to take leave of their deputies, Gondy and Espinac, and give them their last instructions. The legate joined the assembly, with his attendant priests. Gaëtano made no scruple in confessing his Spanish predilections; the mortal illness of the supreme pontiff, and the power wielded by the Spanish cabinet over the conclave, convinced him that the future occupant of St. Peter's chair—if the tiara were not the reward of his own zealous co-operation—would confirm and applaud his acts. "This deputation is a necessity," said the legate, "if only *per dar sodisfatione al popolo*; *sapendo che non si fora concluso niente*."

Some personage thereupon remarked that the dearth was so extreme that the city must ere long fall for lack of defenders, into the power of Le Navarrois. "The serene duke of Parma is now on the frontiers," retorted don Bernardo de Mendoza. "His Catholic majesty is faithful, and moved with a mighty zeal for the faith. As for the rest," continued he, "this dearth may be mitigated. At the siege of a certain town, the name of which I forget, bread was made from the powder of dead men's bones. Let such be done here, rather

than make concession to heresy!"[1] The proposition hazarded by Mendoza soon became bruited abroad: the unfortunate Parisians sickened with horror. Nevertheless, a few days subsequently, this terrible expedient was actually the resource of many; and the paste thus manufactured was nicknamed *le pain de madame de Montpensier.*[2] A document was then given to the ambassadors, sealed with the seal of the Union, and signed by the duke de Nemours, licutenant of the duke de Mayenne and governor of Paris, in which it was stated "that the reverend lords, messeigneurs de Paris et de Lyons were commissioned to treat with the 'king of Navarre,' and supplicate him to grant peace to the realm, with permission to the said ambassadors to proceed to the camp of the duke de Mayenne, supposed to be then at Meaux, to promote this said petition." These credentials being informal might not only have been rejected by the king, but the arrest of the envoys would have violated no stipulation. Throughout these protracted negotiations, the Parisians especially, treated the king with an insolent disdain, which, under a less clement sovereign, must have provoked severe retribution. The ambassadors then stepped into a coach and traversed tha streets of the capital in state, amid

[1] De Thou, liv. 99. Etoile, Journal de Henri IV.

[2] Du Puy dans ses notes sur la Satire Menippée.

salvoes of artillery and the beating of drums. At the porte St. Antoine they were met by M. de Biron and a guard.[1] On the ramparts were all the chief personages of Paris—ambassadors, prelates, and ladies, eager to witness the reception of the envoys; for an armistice on both sides had been proclaimed from dawn to nightfall of that eventful day. Madame de Montpensier showed herself arrayed in a green scarf, beset with black *fleurs de lis*. Madame de Guise and her daughter also appeared, attended by many of the adherents of the party, termed Les Politiques. While the saluting from the ramparts of the city continued, silence prevailed throughout the royal quarters. The prelates, conducted by M. de Biron, at length arrived at the abbey of St. Antoine, where they were received in the cloisters by the king. The concourse was immense; every one pressing forwards to gaze on the demeanour of his majesty, and to hear the opening harangue of the prelates. Henry, after the first salutations,[2] proposed to adjourn to the

[1] "M. le baron de Biron les feust recevoir sur le pavé à cent pas près de ladite porte." Discours de ce qui s'est passé en l'armée du roy, etc. Tours—Jamet Mettayer, Imprimeur. 1590.

[2] "Certes, ce fut un digne et notable spectacle de voir le gracieux accueil dont ils usoient de part et d'autre, s'entre-accueillant si aimablement qu'on eut pensé qu'il n'y avoit eu dissention ni différence entre eux." Discours notable.—Mém. de Villeroy.

refectory, saying, with a smile to the archbishop of Lyons, who looked hot and annoyed at the multitudes surrounding him, "Monseigneur, pardon this concourse. Believe me, my gallant *noblesse* presses still more closely round my own person on the battle field."[1] The cardinal de Gondy, meantime, appearing to forget his dignity as minister plenipotentiary of the League, while accepting the greetings of his friends, and indulging in the facetious repartee in which he excelled, was sharply reminded by his colleague of his want of gravity and decorum, as, side by side, they followed his majesty to the chamber of audience. There the king took his seat beneath a superb canopy, the chief nobles forming a semi-circle. The chancellor stood on the right of Henry's chair of state, and the duke de Nevers on his left. The cardinal de Gondy then opened his mission. He spoke at length on the miseries of the realm, and declared that "he was deputed by MM. de Paris to visit the camp of the king, and learn from his majesty upon what conditions he would grant a general peace: afterwards, if enabled by a gracious safe conduct from the king, he was instructed to proceed and submit the same to M. de Mayenne, and supplicate the latter to negotiate between

[1] Recueil de ce qui s'est passé à la conférence.—Mém. de la Ligue, vol. iv. p. 318.

his majesty and the city of Paris." The archbishop of Lyons hastily added "that they hoped to consume four days only in their journey to and from the camp of the duke de Mayenne; when, if they failed in their endeavours, or that the said duke was not prepared to succour Paris, they would return and make separate treaty with his majesty." Many of the nobles present, with difficulty refrained from expressing their indignation at the cool audacity of these proposals. The king, however, with immoveable countenance, expressed his desire to confer privately with the ambassadors; and rising, Henry retired with the archbishop into his closet. The conference lasted an hour. Meantime, the cardinal de Gondy was entertained by his old friends, the courtiers of the late reign. Cheverny and the marshal de Biron taunted the prelate on his temporizing policy, which, like that of M. d'Epernon, they averred, sought to content both parties, but pleased neither. "Even monseigneur, you the prelate of our most illustrious Order, no longer, I perceive, wear your St. Esprit. With what face do you suppose you can appear before his majesty, when you behold him, as you will do, enthroned in the Louvre?" asked Cheverny. "*Doucement, messieurs,*" retorted the cardinal. "It is true that I no longer wear my St. Esprit. Why? Because

its exhibition, prelate as I am, would cause me to be smitten to the ground in the streets of Paris. I carry it, however, in my pocket."[1] So saying, the cardinal displayed the riband and jewel of the Order, which he protested, in obedience to the statutes, he had never laid aside. Gondy was then summoned to confer with the king. Henry conversed for a long interval on the condition of Paris. These audiences over, his majesty assembled his council to confer on the answer to be returned to the deputies. Henry perceived with his accustomed discernment that the council of the League, still Spanish at heart, made concessions unwillingly, and with no intention, unless driven to the direst extremity, to accept the articles of any convention which he might propose. The secretary of state Revol, by his majesty's command, exhibited the credentials of the ambassadors. The careless and irregular manner in which these documents were drawn, convinced the council that it was afterwards intended to deny the official character of the embassage, in case succours arrived from the duke de Mayenne. Biron, Turenne, Châtillon, Rosny, and others of his majesty's faithful counsellors advised the king to dismiss the ambassadors, and immediately to storm the city,

[1] Discours de ce qui s'est passé en l'armée du roy depuis le 23me Juillet au 7me d'Aoust.—A Tours, 1590.

which must now fall an easy prey to the royal army. The duke de Nevers, d'O, the duke de Longueville, Givry, and others, however, implored the king to spare his capital city the horrors of pillage.

These noblemen, though they recognized the royal title of the king, yet served him with lukewarm zeal. Henry's religion was the abyss which yawned between them and his kingly claims. To avoid calamity still more vivid, they had hailed Henry as king: his valour, his victories, his joyous nature, and generous forgiveness of past insults, attached them to his person. The proud aristocracy of France despised the plebeian Leaguer: with chivalrous ardour it also repelled the thrall of Spanish usurpation. The abjuration of the king, however, the nobles felt to be a political necessity—the condition of their own future preponderance and power. Therefore, though the victories of the king elicited enthusiastic admiration, the nobles throughout the contest ever threw the weight of their influence and power to restrain his final triumph over the factions which convulsed the realm. King they had proclaimed Henry, in virtue of his right and his own valorous arm; but the splendours of royalty, the ease, the delights and privileges of sovereign power should alone, they resolved, be enjoyed by a monarch professing their own faith—the worthy and orthodox representative of

their canonized king. Paris once in the power of the king, and the League driven forth, the contest was virtually terminated; as in the battle field, Mayenne was no competitor for Henri Quatre. Equality with the latter must therefore, by surrender of rights, be then purchased from Philip II., the hereditary foe of France; and victory, by the shameful prostration of the banner of the *fleur de lis* before the red cross of Spain. The policy, therefore, of the great nobles was to temporize — to exhaust the sanguine hopes, and weary the courage of their king by tedious campaigns; to tempt him, when writhing under the mortification inflicted by their tardy co-operation, or by their gross mismanagement of the finances, with proof that, on his abjuration, every noble and every corporate body of the realm would joyfully cry, "*Vive le Roy!*"[1] The duke de Sully, insinuates, that in defiance of their true opinion and military *savoir*, the nobles present at the council in the abbey of St. Antoine, advised the king to abstain from the storm of Paris: and that anticipating the

[1] The duke de Mayenne and the duke de Nemours wrote at this period to king Henry stating, "que rien ne les empechoient de le reconnoître que la diversité de la religion." "N'en doutez pas," replied Henry, "qu'avec la grâce de Dieu, et la justice de mes armes je ne vienne à bout de Paris, et aussi des ducs de Mayenne et Nemours." Mathieu, Hist. du Règne de Henri IV. liv. i. p. 48, et seq.

advance of Mayenne and his ally the duke of Parma, and the consequent raising of the siege, they were not sorry thus tacitly to check the progress of the king.

The ambassadors were, therefore, again summoned into the presence — the tender heart of the king, on this occasion, responding to the counsel of his insidious advisers. Henry commenced by commenting on the insulting omission of his royal title in the so-called letters of credence: "For," said his majesty, "if I am only king of Navarre, I have nothing to say or to enact in the pacification of France. Not, however, to lay stress on this gross informality, I have to inform you, messeigneurs, that what you ask me to grant is impossible. I will admit of no interference between me and my city of Paris. Paris is my eldest daughter, the head and crown of my realm. I am willing to bestow every amnesty and mercy on her; but she shall alone owe me thanks for her preservation, and not attribute it to the duke de Mayenne, or to the king of Spain. M. de Mayenne, is at the head of an army of Spaniards. Messeigneurs! you ought to expire with shame—you, who are both Frenchmen born, dare to connive at Spanish usurpation by bearing me such proposals! I am willing, nevertheless, to sign a general pacification: but not at the dictation of M. de Ma-

yenne. You have had the cowardice, messieurs, to witness the miserable death of 10,000 of my poor Parisians; and have refrained from the smallest expression of compunction for fear of offending the legate and don Bernardo de Mendoza! Monsieur le cardinal, where is your Christian compassion—you who made vow to tend the sheep of your flock? God, be assured, will require at your hands every drop of blood shed through your evil counsel! As for you, M. de Lyons, chief of my bishops,[1] beware! and remember the example expected from a primate of your dignity. Is it lawful to betray your flock even to please the king of Spain?[2] I make reply, therefore, to your mission—and if my proposals are accepted by my citizens of Paris, I will then grant you liberty to communicate with M. de Mayenne. I propose, therefore, if within eight days you are not succoured by the duke, you shall make capitulation, and presently give me hostages for the performance of this capitulation. If within this period you are relieved, I will set these said hostages at liberty. Also, if within these said eight days, M. de Mayenne accepts articles for a general pacification

[1] The archbishop of Lyons bore the title of Primat des Gaules.

[2] "Vous en aurez les pieds chauffés en l'autre monde," said his majesty.

through your intervention—I can grant no more. You will, therefore, explain my intentions to your citizens. If they accept my conditions, they will be relieved from famine at the expiration of eight days. If, however, they still contumaciously repulse my bounty, and hold out to the last, they shall find in me a king, and a just judge, who will to a certainty avenge on the guilty, the miserable perdition of his people!"[1] "Sire," replied Gondy, "the reason wherefore we proposed the negotiation of a general pacification, was, that if Paris alone makes capitulation, the town will again be besieged by the duke de Mayenne, or by the king of Spain. Moreover, under present circumstances, half the population would abandon the capital if entered by you!" Henry rose, and glancing on his chivalrous nobles, exclaimed warmly, "*Pardieu!* let M. de Mayenne, backed by all his allies assail us. He shall find that the nobles of France know how to defend themselves and the honour of their king!"[2] The hall of council rang at these words with acclamations of "*Vive le Roy!*" When the enthusiasm abated, Henry continued: "It is in vain that you argue, messeigneurs. I will not

[1] "Au lieu de la miséricorde que je leur offre, j'en ôterai la misère, et ils auront la corde." Cayet, Chron. Novennaire.

[2] "S'ils y viennent par Dieu nous les battrons bien, et leur montrerons que la noblesse française sait se défendre!"

receive M. de Mayenne, or the king of Spain as mediator between myself and my city of Paris. The absurdity is great indeed, for the envoys of a town stricken with famine, to talk of persuading M. de Mayenne to consent to such articles as I could accept as the basis of a solid pacification. You have, however, my permission to essay the effect of your eloquence on the conditions you know."[1] Henry then placed in the hands of the prelates, a letter written by the Spanish ambassador to the king of Spain, and found on the person of an individual arrested during the previous day. . Mendoza bitterly complained of the decision given by the theologians consulted on the question, as to whether persons communicating with the prince of Béarn fell under the penalties of the sentence of excommunication launched against the said prince. "God preserve your Catholic majesty," wrote the ambassador, "and console and save me from further annoyance." Gondy at once admitted the probable design of the ambassador, "which, sire, it only needs your return to the faith of your fathers to frustrate."[2] Henry re-

[1] De Thou, liv. 99. Mém. de la Ligue, t. iv; Cayet, Chron. Nov. Mathieu, Hist. de Henri IV. Etoile, Journal de Henri IV.

[2] "Si vous étiez catholique, sire," said M. de Vitry, "Paris viendrait vous adorer comme un dieu!" "Vraiment," sarcasti-

plied, "Let us commence, monsieur, by putting evil men from our councils. I protest to you that my heart weeps for my people, and that I sorrow over every house, garden, and orchard destroyed in this calamitous struggle." Turning then towards Prevôt curé of St. Severin, who accompanied the ambassadors, the king said, "You give me a miserable opinion of your religion, M. le curé, when I see you and others of your order so indifferent to the eternal and temporal welfare of your people by provoking malignant passions; and by showing such disregard for bodily anguish!" His majesty then mounted his horse, and waving his farewell to the ambassadors, departed for St. Denis.[1] As the envoys acknowledged that the city of Paris had no alternative but to accept the proposals of the king, Cheverny promised that the passports, authorizing the prelates to visit M. de Mayenne, should be sent into Paris by M. d'Andelot early the following morning.

The same afternoon, many of the cavaliers of the royal army repaired on horseback in gallant array to salute the ladies, who still continued their promenade on the ramparts.[2] During this

cally replied the king, "vous êtes un bon religieux, M. de Vitry!"

[1] Discours de ce qui s'est passé en l'armée du roy, etc. Imprimé à Tours l'an 1590.

[2] Les princesses s'étoient encore presentées sur les mêmes

short truce, madame de Guise and her daughter appeared. "The gallants of the royal army approached to converse with their friends, but more especially to gaze at mademoiselle de Guise," candidly writes the young princess herself, in her brief history of the court of Henry IV. The handsome person and gorgeous equipments of the duke de Bellegarde were greatly admired by the princess; "and from that moment, mademoiselle de Guise, who had hitherto despised every other suitor, acknowledged that it might be possible to feel admiration for another besides a king!" The duke accosted the princess; then addressing himself to madame de Guise, he stated his desire to vindicate himself from the charge of having shared in, or connived at the crime which deprived her of a husband. On the night previous to the assassination of the duke de Guise, Bellegarde attended Henry III. at his *coucher*, and remained alone in conversation with his majesty until midnight; from which circumstance, the duke had been denounced by the League as a chief accomplice in the murder.

ramparts, et toute cette noblesse s'alloit promenant par la campagne, saluant les dames, et embrassant leurs amis, communiquant et devisant avec eux en toute familiarité et douceur; aussi en cette rencontre plusieurs Parisiens moyennèrent leur sortie de la ville.—Discours véritable du siège de Paris, printed in Mém. de Villeroy, t. ii.

Madame de Guise graciously accepted the explanation, and addressing the young princess—who accuses her mother of being likewise smitten by the "fascinating Bellegarde"—the duchess commanded her to believe the words of M. le duc, as she placed implicit faith in his denial. According to the statement of mademoiselle de Guise, "her wit and grace then so captivated the duke," as to make him forget his allegiance to the beautiful mademoiselle d'Estrées, and devote himself to win the alluring "present object." Nevertheless, the duke's flirtation with mademoiselle de Guise had not the effect of alienating him from his *fiancée*, whom he would willingly, at this period, have privately married, but for his dread of the extreme anger of the king. M. de Givry, also, appeared, to greet the duchesse de Montpensier, whose colours he wore. With pale and downcast countenance the duchesse de Mayenne, accompanied by two of her daughters, showed herself in the hope of seeing the king, or the duke de Nevers, to whose son her eldest daughter was betrothed. Henry, however, had retired to St. Denis; and the duke de Nevers was far too skilful a courtier to abandon his royal master, whom he had so recently joined, to hold converse with contumacious Parisians. The duchesses de Mayenne and d'Aumale openly deplored the rebellion; and

subscribed themselves in the letters they frequently exchanged as "*les victimes de la Ligue maudite.*" The charms of the duchesse d'Aumale, on the accession of Henry III., nearly won the crown matrimonial. Beautiful and sprightly as were most of the princesses of the house of Lorraine, Marie d'Elbœuf excelled them all in the opinion of the late king: and after the demise of the princesse de Condé, but for the opposition of the queen-mother, he would have elevated her to the throne. After Henry's union with Louise de Lorraine, Marie espoused the duke d'Aumale. Throughout his reign, she ever remained Henry's faithful subject; and on the decease of the king, repaired with her only daughter to her husband's castle of Anet and there led a life of seclusion.

The princesses retired before a discharge of artillery from the heights of Montmartre proclaimed the termination of the armistice. The duke de Bellegarde, as mademoiselle de Guise informs us, departed "very pensive, burdened with a thousand thoughts, some pleasant, others disquieting." At the same time the archbishop of Lyons and the cardinal de Gondy re-entered the city;[1] they having availed themselves of the

[1] Comme on s'apperçut que la conférence de St. Antoine ne produisait ny l'accord, ny l'abondance, il y eut une grande émotion en la cour du Palais, où Lignerac qui la voulait em-

truce to its fullest extent in the enjoyment of the good cheer and congenial society of the royal camp.

A great concourse awaited the ambassadors in the streets of the quartier St. Antoine. The famishing people expected that the envoys, if successful in their mission, would be preceded by a convoy of provision-carts, as an earnest of the plenty which on the morrow was to pour into the city: therefore, when the coach of their cardinal-bishop alone drearily passed the barriers, a loud and dismal wail rent the air which was heard in the royal camp. Throughout the night the populace committed outrageous excesses, inflamed to greater fury by emissaries of the Seize. These agents were for the most part monks and itinerant preachers. They asserted that the king had positively rejected all accommodation; and that he had vowed the destruction of the orthodox faith and of its bulwark, the city of Paris. During the night the executive government took active measures for the preservation of public tranquillity. Guards were posted at the hôtels of the princesses, in the Palais, and in most of the public edifices. The following day, Monday, August 6th, Gondy and the archbishop of Lyons, before a great as-

pêcher fut blessé. Le duc de Nemours y vint avec deux cent cinquante lansquenets.—Mathieu, Hist. de Henri IV. livre i.

sembly, made relation of their ambassage; and explained upon what terms permission had been granted them to repair to the camp of M. de Mayenne. The sieur d'Andelot[1] at the same time presented the passes; also letters from the king to the duke de Nemours governor of Paris, and to his mother. "*Mon cousin,*" wrote Henry to the duke, "you have sufficiently demonstrated your valour and courage. Do not imagine that Paris will be succoured. If you compel me to take the city by assault, you well know that I cannot save the citizens from ruin, pillage, and calamity. Even should the succour arrive which you expect, it cannot reach you without a pitched battle. Your brother too well remembers our last encounter to venture on a third. Your condition would not improve, even did the Almighty will that I should experience defeat. You would fall under the yoke of Spain—that most galling and tyrannous of all bondages. Reflect, therefore, I pray you: recognise me as your king and friend while I may owe you obligation. Take warning by the past, *mon cousin*, and improve the future."[2] This pithy and sensible letter pro-

[1] Charles de Châtillon Coligny, sieur d'Andelot, son of the admiral de Coligny. He had been taken prisoner in a sortie. D'Andelot was eventually seduced by the duc de Nemours to go over to the League, to the great distress of his brother Châtillon.

[2] Corneio—Discours du siège de Paris.

duced some effect on the duke de Nemours. The triumphs of the king, and the privations which they experienced, were fast subduing the haughty spirit of the princes of Lorraine. Henry, with great wiliness, addressed himself at this period to the besetting passion of each. D'Andelot was commissioned by his majesty to hint to madame de Guise, that he had no repugnance to bestow his sister madame Catherine, on her son. To mademoiselle de Guise, the subtle envoy insinuated that her chances of the crown matrimonial would be tenfold enhanced could she visit the court at Mantes. The duchesse de Montpensier suffered herself to be propitiated by proposals for the release of her nephew, the duke de Guise; an event which she passionately desired. Madame de Mayenne required no incentive to induce her to grasp with eagerness the slender hope extended, that her release from Paris was at hand. Even the chevalier d'Aumale showed symptoms of relenting; for madame de Ste. Beuve had fallen a victim of the prevailing pestilence. On Wednesday, August 8th, the envoys therefore departed for Meaux, provided with every necessary power from the council to "mediate" between the king and the duke.[1]

[1] Mathieu states that Henry met the prelates on their departure from Paris, and held a long conference with them at the back of the palace of the Tuileries, liv. i. p. 50.

Mayenne, during this long interval, had been recruiting his forces and completing his convention with Spain. For every concession made to the importunity of the duke, Philip II. demanded an equivalent; this rapacity, therefore, it was that rendered the negotiation tedious, and detained the duke at Laon and Cambray. The delays of the Spanish court, and the suspicious wariness of Mayenne had already inflicted a mortal blow on the cause. From Laon the duke removed his head-quarters to Meaux. There he was joined by the duke d'Aumale, the count de Chaligny, M. de Châtre a veteran of great experience in arms, the marquis de Maignelais, the sieur de Balagny, and M. St. Paul.[1] Meanwhile, the desperate condition of the Parisians, and the prayers of Mendoza made salutary impression on the Spanish cabinet. They foresaw in the capitulation of Paris the downfall of the League, and the extinction of the alleged claims of the infanta. The very tenacity of the resistance offered to the king, afforded evidence of the power wielded by the faction of the Seize through their agents the priests, and by their turbulent demonstrations. These demagogues — for the most part hirelings of the Spanish ambassador — ruled and restrained the unhappy populace even amid horrible suffering. Conse-

[1] De Thou, liv. 99.

quently, the cabinet of Madrid tardily resolved to protect and foster a faction so devoted and obedient. Orders were, therefore, a second time transmitted to the Flemish viceroy, the duke de Parma,[1] commanding him at whatever risk of the peace of the Netherlands, to join the duke de Mayenne and aid him to raise the siege of Paris. Parma reluctantly obeyed the mandate. The affairs of Flanders were in precarious position—one able move made during his absence by prince Maurice[2] might be followed by a general insurrection. Besides, Farnese, justly proud of his great repute as the first military captain of the age, had no desire at the close of his career to measure his fame against that of the victor of Arques and Ivry. Nevertheless, there was no alternative but to obey orders, which reached Valenciennes by express. Farnese, therefore, notified to the duke de Mayenne his approaching juncture at the head of 13,000 men. The deputies of the League—the cardinal de Gondy and the archbishop of Lyons — arrived in

[1] Alexander Farnese duke of Parma, viceroy of the Low Countries, son of Octavio Farnese first duke of Parma of the name of Farnese, and of Marguerite, illegitimate daughter of Charles V. The duke of Parma married Marie de Guimaraens, by whom he had two sons and one daughter. The duke of Parma died in 1592. His tomb is still to be seen at Parma.

[2] Son of the great prince of Orange, Guillaume de Nassau, and the heir of his father, his elder brother Philippe Guillaume, being detained in Spain. Prince Maurice died in 1625.

camp on the very day that Mayenne received this welcome message. The recital of the archbishop greatly moved the duke, and drew from him repeated ejaculations of surprise at the dogged endurance displayed by the people. Mayenne, however, perceiving that in the extremity to which the people were reduced an assault on their city must end by its capitulation, resolved to temporize—the more so, as he learned from the envoys that the king placed no credit in the rumour that the duke of Parma would march to the relief of the Parisians. He therefore dismissed the ambassadors, and desired them to inform the king "that he earnestly wished to conclude a peace, and would without delay confer on the subject." Mayenne, however, treacherously wrote a private letter to the duke de Nemours, which he sent by his confidential secretary Desportes, who travelled to Paris in the suite of the archbishop. The duke therein admonished the Parisians not to be alarmed at his answer to the envoys: for that he would rather die than conclude a peace, the king of Navarre still persisting in his heresy; but that his acquiescence was a *ruse* to save their town from assault, as the duke of Parma would be at Meaux in four days.[1] The am-

[1] "Le Mercredi 9me du mois d'Aout, le Cardinal de Gondy et l'archevêque de Lyons s'accheminèrent vers le duc de Ma-

bassadors thereupon returned to the royal camp.

The archbishop of Lyons expatiated before the council at his first audience on the favourable disposition of the duke; though he was cognizant of the letters written by Mayenne, and secretly held intelligence with the hostile factions in the city. Gondy, on the contrary, honestly informed the king, that in his opinion M. de Mayenne was too far engaged with the Spaniards to render peace possible without the assent of the Spanish cabinet; and that he believed the duke of Parma was already on his way to Meaux. The cardinal then requested his majesty's permission under these circumstances to retire to Noisy, which request Henry granted. Espinac, however, boldly proposed to take a second journey to the camp at Meaux, and make a final effort to negotiate a general pacification. He, nevertheless, stated to his majesty, that unless he could convey the welcome news of his abjuration, the minds of the ultra-orthodox party were so exasperated, that he dreaded to return the messenger of evil tidings. Henry hotly retorted, "Monseigneur, be silent on that subject!

yenne, qui les renvoya vers le roy avec déclaration qu'il ne désiroit que la paix; et en même temps il donna avis aux Seize, de ne point s'allarmer de ce traité, qu'il mourroit plutôt que de faire la paix."—L'Etoile, Journal de Henri IV. Mezerai. De Thou, liv. 99.

I will die professing the reformed faith!" The pertinacity of the king in persisting in his refusal to make any religious concession whatever, forms the most inexplicable feature of his career at this period. His majesty, while steadily declining to avail himself of that priestly counsel which, on his accession, he had solemnly promised to seek, relaxed in his attendance at the *prêche* holden in his camp; and frequently discoursed respecting his reconciliation with the Holy See. Henry's faith had never been a religion of the heart, like that of the deceased prince of Condé, despite the melancholy misanthropy of the latter. Sixtus V. would have made any possible concession to insure the abjuration of King Henry; an event which the dying pontiff declared he should regard as the seal and crown of his pontifical labours. Far from intimidating the subjects of the king by ecclesiastical censures, Sixtus sent his benediction to the nobles in Henry's camp; and had exhorted them to persevere in obedience to their temporal prince. Moreover, his holiness all but disowned the proceedings of his legate; and had threatened to supersede the cardinal, and exile him to his diocesan city of Capua. All the noble personages surrounding the king, orthodox as well as professing the reformed creed, scrupled not to avow their conviction that a Calvinist monarch never would be tolerated.

Amongst these was the king's devoted servant Maximilian de Béthune, baron de Rosny. The prudence and foresight which Rosny possessed in an extraordinary degree led him to this conclusion. Rosny, at this period, held no place in the administration; scarcely was he accepted as belonging to the household of the king. The haughty courtiers of the late reign rarely condescended to recognize the existence of that pale, studious, and taciturn man, distinguished by no graces of person, who seemed almost to haunt the ante-chamber of his majesty's private cabinet; but who, ere many months elapsed, ruled the camp, and enabled his master to triumph despite their peculations and lack of zeal. The whole tenour of Henry's private life, his addresses, and especially his deportment towards the ministers of the reformed churches during his long sojourn in Béarn, demonstrate that honest conviction and heartfelt adherence to the Protestant creed were not the actuating motives of his conduct. The king, therefore, committed a grave politicall error not to tender an abjuration which, a few months' subsequently, cost him no effort more arduous than a few caustic jests. Once before, after the demise of the duke d'Aleçon (1586), he perpetrated the same mistake in his rejection of the solemn mission of the duke d'Epernon,

sent by the late king, to implore Henry to renounce his so-called errors, and repair to court in his new dignity of heir presumptive. At that period, however, the advice of madame de Guiche had great weight with the king; besides, the power in which the faction of Lorraine rallied and its acknowledged designs on the crown, might reasonably cause Henry to hesitate ere he severed his union with the great reformed party in the realm and its Protestant alliances.

A council was summoned at Chelles after the departure of the archbishop upon his second mission, to consider and remedy this adverse state of events. The presence of the duke of Parma in France was deemed a fact so incredible, considering the critical condition of affairs in Flanders, as almost to challenge disbelief of its truth. The duke de Nevers counselled the immediate advance of the royal army, to intercept and offer battle to the Spaniards, should the report of the invasion be confirmed. This proposition met with the approval of the majority of the council. Unhappily, however, the decision was not taken previously to storm the capital. After the incredible sufferings and outlay attending the siege, it was deemed more politic and humane for the king to abandon his entrenchments, than to deliver the miserable and deluded people from their tyrants by one masterly

stroke. At a more advanced period of his reign, Henry would not have shown himself so submissive to the dicta of his nobles; who for months subsequently helped his majesty with their right hand, and ruined him with the left.

In Paris, meanwhile, the letter sent by Mayenne to the duke de Nemours was publicly read. Hopes of vengeance again fired the miserable populace; and with renewed energy they flew to their entrenchments, and vigorously returned the cannonade, which the king continued to direct against the portes St. Antoine and St. Germain. Once again the curés triumphed. Services were performed in the churches twice during the day; and the most impious and fanatical orations issued from the lips of the preachers. Masses for those who had miserably perished in the famine, amounting to, 19,000 persons, were said: the churches were, on these occasions, crowded by half-starved suppliants, whose ferocious yet sorrow-stained faces glared with fury, as the preacher poured forth denunciation and invectives. The intelligence of the advance of Farnese restored Mendoza to his former popularity. He was again venerated as an oracle; and the people no longer contemptuously rejected his ducats stamped with the effigies of king Philip, and his daughter, the Infanta.

On the 22nd day of August, the duke of Parma arrived at Meaux.[1] From Valenciennes the duke marched in battle array, displaying at his van the flag of Spain. A brilliant body of Spanish, Flemish, and Italian nobles formed the duke's body guard. Amongst these were the princes de Chimay and d'Arschot, counts Aremburg and Barlaimont, don Antonio de Zuñiga, don Sancho de Leyva, and Juan Baptista de Taxis, count of Villa Mediana. The duke was received with great pomp.[2] On his arrival at Meaux, he first proceeded to the cathedral, where a solemn service was performed. The duke then publicly protested that the sole motive for which the armies of his Catholic majesty entered France was, to extirpate heresy; and that, personally, he was ready to devote life and everything that could be deemed precious for the same holy cause. This declaration was afterwards printed and widely dispersed over the realm. The dukes of Parma and Mayenne then retired

[1] Discours sur la venue en France du duc de Parme.—Tours, 1590. "Le duc de Parme, Italien de nation, obligé d'être François d'affection, et néanmoins par crainte et ambition fait Espagnol de faction, et par de longues pratiques plein de vanité et de présomption," writes this anonymous author, a zealous royalist.

[2] De Thou, liv. 99. The haughty nobles of the duke's suite however treated the lords of the League with great disdain. "Les Espagnols qui pensoient être tous anges les desdaignoient de telle sorte qu'ils ne permettoient que autre que M. de Mayenne entrast dans la chambre de M. le duc de Parme."

to hold council on the means of relieving Paris, a conference to which the archbishop of Lyons, who had just arrived at Meaux on his second mission, was invited. Farnese loftily lauded the prowess of his army; and announced his intention "to uncork ere many days elapsed one of the rivers so carefully sealed by Le Navarrois;" and thus pour abundant provisions into the beleaguered city. The archbishop, careful to omit none of the formal proposals which devolved on the envoy, then laid before the princes the following article:—"That a suspension of arms should be agreed upon by both the contending parties, during which the terms of a permanent pacification might be arranged, or Paris revictualled." The duke of Parma replied, without consulting his colleague, "that he had arrived, not to treat with the heretic usurper, but to deliver the orthodox from extermination, and to save the city of Paris. As for the revictualling of the said city, until all his forces were collected, he relied on the prudent resources of M. de Mayenne." Espinac, therefore, secretly well satisfied with this declaration, returned to the royal camp and informed the king, that now after the arrival of M. de Parme the duke de Mayenne[1] could do nothing without

[1] "M. de Mayenne," says Villeroy, "est si enragé de ce secours qu'il n'etoit plus capable de la paix."

his assent; and that his said highness had taken oath to raise the siege of Paris. By intelligence brought to the camp, Henry knew that the rear guard of the Spanish army had not arrived at Meaux; and, until after the junction of this division with the main army, Farnese resolutely refused to stir. A few precious days, therefore, still remained to the king, during which he might have rendered himself master of Paris. Châtillon, Turenne, and the Huguenot chivalry in vain urged Henry to give the assault. "His majesty," says M. de Péréfixe, "resisted these entreaties and the mutinous cries of the soldiery, because he apprehended that the Huguenots were resolved to avenge the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve on the citizens of Paris, by burning the capital and slaying the majority of inhabitants." The priests of the capital had aforetime availed themselves of this apprehension, to excite to a higher pitch the resistance of the people. After the raising of the blockade, Nemours confessed that had the king then stormed the city, Paris had no other alternative but to capitulate. "His majesty," says Sully, "could not endure the reflexion that his capital should be converted into a vast cemetery. He had, therefore, privily connived at the relief of his poor people; and feigned to ignore the notorious fact that his officers and soldiers often introduced

provisions into the city for the relief of their friends; or, by way of barter, for their own benefit. The king believed that he should, therefore, secure the gratitude of the Parisians. He deceived himself, however; for after the arrival of the duke of Parma, the populace insulted the clement benevolence of the prince, who had shown himself only too sensible to the miseries of his people."

Henry, therefore, after mature counsel, resolved to go forwards and meet the invaders, and not suffer himself to be surprised in his entrenchments. "We will not commit," said the king, "the fault of Francis I. before Pavia, who allowed himself to be attacked in his camp at Mirabello by the Imperial army." The nobles enthusiastically hailed the prospect of a fourth conflict, though they showed themselves so little ardent for the capture of Paris. The soldiers, also, partook in the excitement; the monotony of the camp was beginning to be irksome, especially as M. d'O had recently relaxed in the punctuality of his advances for the pay of the troops—one of the methods by which the orthodox nobles continually tried to impede the victorious progress of their sovereign. Henry personally suffered from the mismanagement of his finances. His table was often inefficiently supplied; and such was the disregard shown by

d'O for the comfort and dignity of his royal master, that but for occasional aid derived from the elaborate wardrobe of the late king, the least of the gentlemen in the suite of the great nobles would have disdained to appear in the habiliments of their king. The king, however, good-humouredly bore these annoyances; laughing and jesting, and consoling M. de Rosny, who witnessed with indignation the discomfort of his royal master. One day, at this period, Henry asked his first *valet-de-chambre*, in the presence of M. d'O, who bore the title of master of the robes, if he had a dozen shirts? "Sire! yes; but half of these said shirts are so torn that they cannot be worn." "Well; now for my pocket-handkerchiefs," persisted his majesty. "I think you told me that I possessed eight?" "You have only five handkerchiefs, Sire." Upon this, M. d'O said that "he had just ordered for his majesty's use a quantity of fine Flanders linen to the amount of 6,000 crowns. "Ah!" said the king, "I perceive, while here in the camp you treat me as a schoolboy—frozen at college then roasted at home. These said shirts then, monsieur, will be ready when we enter the Louvre?"[1] Half the affronts to which, at this period, Henry was subjected, lost their sting

[1] Recueil de quelques actions et paroles mémorables de Henri le Grand.—Imprimé à Leyde 1663.

by his majesty's happy facetiousness of disposition.

On the 30th day of August, the king raised the siege of Paris, and marching from Chaillot, took up his quarters at Chelles. The retreat was conducted with consummate skill. The faubourgs were simultaneously evacuated on a given signal, that no isolated body of soldiery might be exposed to the fury of the populace. A strong garrison kept possession of the town of St. Denis. Henry, besides, had constructed two forts on the Seine, above the town of Conflans, which he armed with cannon. On the evening preceding the withdrawal of the troops, it had been hotly debated whether a portion of the army should remain to hold the faubourgs, so that the siege might virtually continue. All Henry's officers opposed this scheme. It was alleged that the king could not spare the requisite number of troops from the main army; and that as for cutting off the provision convoys which might attempt to enter Paris, the bribes of the citizens would cause the half-clad and irregularly-paid soldiers to connive at their passage. A proclamation was next issued, signed by the king and Biron, stating that the siege was temporarily suspended, as his majesty was about to chase from the realm the Spanish invaders. Appended was a Declaration, in which

the king accorded toleration and protection to persons professing the Roman Catholic Apostolic faith.

The duke de Nevers counselled the king to entrench his army at Claye, a little village in a fine open country between Paris and Meaux. Biron, however, who jealously resented interference, persuaded Henry, against his better judgment, to encamp at Chelles. The royal army, therefore, occupied a rising ground which sloped down to a marshy valley, in the midst of which stood the dilapidated castle of Brou. Separated by this marsh from the royal camp, rose heights similar to those over which Henry's army spread.[1] In vain Turenne and Châtillon observed to the marshal de Biron, that in case the army of the League seized the opposite heights, a battle became impossible from the nature of the intervening ground; and, therefore, that the duke of Parma would be enabled to march without obstacle upon Lagny which commanded the river Marne. Biron, however, refused to be convinced;[2] and so effectually per-

[1] Lettre du roi au duc de Montpensier, F. de Béthune—MS. 9045, fol. 57. Bibl. Imp. Mémoires et correspondance de Duplessis-Mornay.

[2] The overbearing character of Biron, who would suffer no military advice to be acted upon but his own, or that taken in concert with the king, occasioned endless feuds. Henry gave the marshal the most sturdy support, and never reproached him even when defeat followed the adoption of his counsel. The

suaded the king, that Henry declared himself to be of similar opinion. This was one of the most serious military errors committed by the king, and brought great reverses to the royal arms. Although the army had abandoned the faubourgs of the capital, Paris remained almost as closely blockaded. The towns, bridges, and forts, with the exception of Vincennes, within a circuit of from ten to fifteen miles, were garrisoned by royal troops. If Henry, therefore, could have arrested by a battle the advance of Mayenne and his allies, he still held Paris in durance. The royal army consisted of 24,000 men, besides the Swiss and German mercenaries. It comprehended six princes, two marshals of France, and a body of between four and five thousand nobles.

The forces under Farnese and Mayenne, amounted to 22,000 men—veteran soldiers, well fed, well clothed, and punctually paid. On the 28th day of August, the allied army commenced its march towards Paris. The van was commanded by the duc d'Aumale and la Châtre; the dukes of Parma and Mayenne led the

king believed that he owed the marshal a debt of gratitude, for Biron's immediate recognition of his royal rights. "Les oisons veulent mener paître les oies," said the king one day when Châtillon contradicted Biron in the royal presence. "Il faut tant que nous sommes, allions à l'école de M. le Maréchal." Mathieu, t. ii, p. 16.

centre; while the count de Chaligny, M. St. Paul, and La Motte governor of Gravelines, followed with the rear-guard and a powerful siege train of thirty pieces of ordnance. Mayenne held nominal command only in this army of Spaniards, which he had so treasonably lured on to the soil of France. Farnese, although his bodily infirmities prevented him from taking an active share in warfare, ruled everything from his tent. His orders embraced every contingency; his spies were everywhere; the military dicipline of his troops was perfect. Cold, dictatorial, self-reliant, and imbued with overstrained notions of the power of the Spanish monarchy, and devoted to Philip II., at whose court he had been educated, the duke of Parma permitted no murmur, and accepted neither counsel nor remonstrance. Twice in his career, Parma by his implicit deference to the will of Philip II., proclaimed to the world his own estimate of the obedience which he so sternly exacted. The crown of Portugal on the demise of the cardinal-king in 1580, might have been claimed by the duke's son Ranuzio, in right of the mother of the latter Marie de Guimaraens. Philip forbade his viceroy to assert the hereditary claims of the prince. Farnese obeyed. When the ducal coronet of Parma fell to Farnese on the demise of his father, the former requested Philip's

permission to resign his command, and retire to spend the remainder of his life in the peaceful exercise of his sovereign rights. Philip returned a positive refusal to this request. Farnese, though broken in health, and burdened with domestic care, again respected the mandate of his liege lord, and continued to the last day of his life to command the armies of Spain.

The allied army crossed the Marne over a bridge of boats, and advanced slowly and in perfect order. Every night the camp was defended by a barricade of baggage waggons: if the army halted for a longer interval, a trench was constructed to fortify the camp.[1] Farnese vigilantly inspected his troops, and refused to accept Mayenne as his substitute. Often the veteran general appeared during the night-watches, carried in a litter, or sometimes in his arm-chair, and made inspection from tent to tent. All officers, therefore, in the Spanish army were alert and vigilant; punishments were meted with rigour: rewards and decorations were on the other hand distributed with rigid impartiality. The duke of Parma quitted Meaux with the intent of offering battle to the king.

[1] "Le duc de Parme campa à la Romaine. Il avoit quatre-vingt mulets de coffres, une grande écurie, pages, estaffiers, un quantité de grands chariots cadenassez, etc."—Discours sur la venue en France de M. de Parme. Tours, 1590.

On the 1st of September, the armies came in sight of each other. Farnese reconnoitred the royal forces from a neighbouring eminence. Their order and number excited his astonishment. "I do not see this assemblage of 10,000 squalid adventurers respecting which you expatiated. I see, instead, a numerous and well disciplined army of 25,000 men with artillery!" drily observed Farnese to M. de Mayenne, as he pointed to Henry's camp with its pavilions surmounted by the banners of the noblest houses in France, in the midst of which towered the standard of the *fleurs de lis*. Farnese, therefore, with characteristic decision, resolved not to risk a combat. His special mission was to raise the siege of Paris, and pour provisions into the famished city. The experienced eye of the duke detected and profited by the oversight committed by Henry in the choice of his camp. Over the opposite heights lay the road to Lagny; and the marsh intervening between the royal camp and the former, the king could not arrest or attack the Spanish army. Early on the morning of the 4th of September, therefore, the duke of Parma encamped *vis-à-vis* to the king, and entrenched himself strongly. From the royal pavilion, the red cross of Spain surmounting the general's tent was visible: dismay and rage filled the heart of the royal soldiery. The

battle—which the nobles so exultingly contemplated, and which they had deemed inevitable and victory certain—now depended on the will of the wily Spaniard. The king himself, loudly deplored his error, but magnanimously forbore to reproach Biron. Lagny was now in eminent peril; and the report prevailed that Mayenne and a division of the army was about to assault that town, while the duke of Parma held his majesty in check. Henry, therefore, on the 7th of September, sent a trumpet and a herald to invite the duke to battle, so as to terminate by one engagement the dissensions of the realm. At the commencement of the herald's harangue, the duke interrupted him with the observation: "I have no power or commandment to offer battle: I am sent alone to relieve Paris." On the termination of the royal message, Farnese made the following imperious reply: "Say to your master, that his Catholic majesty has sent me to extirpate heresy from this hitherto orthodox realm, which by the grace of God, I mean to accomplish! Say to your master, if I find that the shortest method to achieve this be by offering him battle, I will not only offer him battle at such time, but find means to compel his acceptance of my defiance! You may now leave my camp."[1] The mortification of the king

[1] Victor Palma Cayet, Chron. Novennaire.

was intense. Mayenne and his siege-train soon appeared before Lagny; and the threat of Farnese, "that he would uncork one of the rivers so closely sealed by Le Navarrois," seemed on the eve of fulfilment. For eight days the armies confronted each other on the opposite heights; daily skirmishes ensued, but no defiance on the part of the king and his cavaliers could tempt Farnese from the shelter of his entrenchments.[1] "Many persons compared this duke in wily craft to Ulysses, so many were the military achievements which he perpetrated thereby," says a contemporary historian; who expatiates impatiently on the duke's obstinate determination not to quit, "*son marais*," which shielded him from the attack of the king.

On the 9th of September, Lagny capitulated, and was given up to pillage and destruction. Many wealthy personages, who after the battle of Ivry fled from the capital, foreseeing its siege, and had sought shelter in Lagny, were captured, and purchased their lives by ruinous ransoms. At the same time, an enterprise which Henry and Châtillon planned to surprise one of the gates of Paris failed, owing to the vigilant watch maintained by the Jesuits, whose monastery abutted on to the city walls. "This enterprise

[1] Lettre du Roy au duc de Montpensier, Béth. 9045, MS. Bibl. Imp.

availed nothing," says the historian Cayet, "nor did it even suffice to lure the dukes from their marsh." The capture of Lagny having opened the river Marne, and thereby abundantly supplied Paris with provisions, Farnese took good heed not to risk that important advantage; or the loss of the *prestige* of the "invincible Spanish army" on the precarious chances of the battle field.

In Paris, meanwhile, the factions triumphed, and the insolent presumption of Bussy-le-Clerc and the leading demagogues partially annihilated the power of the council of the League. At daybreak, on Thursday, August 30th, the sentinels on going their rounds perceived the departure of the royal army; for so silently had Henry planned and conducted his retreat, that the approaching evacuation of the faubourgs was not even surmised. The soldiers ran shouting into the city proclaiming the welcome tidings; the people gathered on the ramparts; the city gates were thrown open; and uttering exultant cries the populace swarmed into the faubourgs. With avidity, frightful to behold, the starving multitudes ransacked the houses and the deserted encampments in search of food. The accumulated refuse of the royal camp was devoured with eagerness; and bloody frays ensued for the possession of loaves and carcasses

of sheep left by individuals of the army for their friends in the capital. At mid-day, the priests marshalled a solemn procession to Nôtre Dame, to return thanks to Heaven for their miraculous deliverance. A Te Deum was chanted at which the legate presided. The princesses attended, and the duke de Nemours and his colleagues of the council. Panigarola delivered an oration highly lauding the heroic fortitude of the people, which he said, "the Almighty had rewarded by a stupendous intervention." The orator, however, scrupled not to declare "that had Le Navarrois pressed the siege only two days longer, not only must the city have surrendered, but the people would have found themselves compelled to supplicate the king to enter Paris."[1] During the night, a supply of provisions was brought into the town by one Jacques Ferrarois, commandant of the town of Dourdens, who earned the credit of being the first to relieve the necessity of the citizens. The next day, a convoy of a thousand carts filled with grain, arrived from the districts around

[1] Panigarola, also owned this fact in a missive addressed to the duc de Savoye, he says:—"il y restoit fort peu de soldats; il n'y avoit plus personne qui allât aux murailles que les prêtres et les moines. Paris étoit dégarni d'hommes et la plûpart de ce qui restoit demi morts de faim." Discours véritable de tout ce qui s'est passé en la ville de Paris,—Mém. de la Ligue, t. iv.

Chartres, which was sold at an exorbitant price.[1] The duke de Nemours, also, sent an express to the allied camp to notify the partial relief of the city; and, therefore, to exhort the dukes in their zeal not to hazard a disadvantageous conflict. Another two days elapsed, and the capture of Lagny opening to the Parisians the navigation of the river Marne, the city was for a season abundantly supplied.

King Henry, after the fall of Lagny, assembled his nobles and officers at Gonnesse, to hold a council of war. A great resolution had been taken by the king, one which a commander of less genius, patience, and resolution would have hesitated to announce. This determination was to break up his army, and to quarter it by divisions in the provinces. Henry stated—as the dukes were not to be lured from their entrenchments, where, from the nature of the ground, it was impossible to attack them, that their army must be suffered to waste and dissolve, partly by dearth, and partly from camp maladies. He declared that his troops were disorganized by the ease and inaction they had enjoyed when before Paris; and, therefore, that an army so impaired in efficiency, and composed of men of divers nationalities, could not be holden together in requisite discipline, patiently to

[1] Cayet, Chron. Nov.

follow the dukes, and harass them into offering battle whenever they left their encampment on the heights of Pomponne. The king observed, that the raising of the siege of Paris had created painful excitement in the provinces; and that unless the garrisons were reinforced, there was danger lest many towns, believing the royal cause lost, might join the Union. His majesty, therefore, proposed to double the garrisons in the towns of Melun, Corbeil, Senlis, Mantes, Meulan, and St. Denis, and to retain ten thousand men under his own command — a body of troops sufficient to check the movements of the Spaniards. The remaining corps the king did not desire to disband; they were, as his majesty said, to be quartered in the various provinces, ready, on a given signal, to march and reinforce his own division. The king then gave the prince de Conti the command in Tourraine, Anjou, and Maine—these loyal districts, within which no insurrectionary movements were anticipated, being purposely committed to the care of Conti on account of his physical defects. The prince was deaf; and afflicted with so terrible an impediment of speech as, by some historians, to be termed dumb. The duke de Montpensier accepted the command in Normandy; the duke de Longueville that over Picardy; the duke de Nevers in Champagne—the post of

all others which required vigilant ability—and the marshal d'Aumont in Burgundy. The services of Biron, Châtillon, Turenne, Bellegarde, Grammont, and the duke de la Tremouille, the king retained to form his council of war. All these illustrious officers applauded Henry's resolve: *reculer pour mieux sauter* seemed to them, under the present emergency, a decision wise, provident, and politic.[1] Other of the king's partisans, however, ignorant of the true reason of a step which appeared retrogressive, and humiliating as needless, loudly censured the love of pleasure, which, as it was averred, induced the royal cavaliers to shrink from the hardship of a veritable campaign. "Look," said these censors, "and behold the sublime resignation displayed by the Parisians, from the princesses down to the meanest scavengers, under horrible

[1] Another reason alleged by some for the dispersion of the army is the following one; that one day Henry found on the table of his private apartment at Chelles, a manifesto signed by the duke de Montpensier and other great catholic lords, in which it was stated, that despite their zeal, devotion, and allegiance, Henry had not performed the solemn promise which he had made on his accession, to cause himself to be instructed in the catholic faith. The lords, therefore, demanded their dismissal and that of their retainers from the royal army, as their conscience forbade them to aid in perfecting the victory of a heretic king. With tears in his eyes, Henry turned towards the duke de Montpensier; but as the duke feigned not to perceive the mute appeal, Henry resolved to disband his army, before he was compelled to do so by desertions.—Villeroy, t. iv. p. 92.

privations of famine and pestilence, and contrast it with the fastidious softness of our cavaliers! Why is our army disbanded? Only because the royal generals are afraid of being subjected, in their turn, to dearth after the capture of Lagny." Despite these repinings, subsequent events completely justified the prudence and prevision of their gallant monarch. On Wednesday, September 12th, therefore, Henry's great and victorious army dispersed.[1] The king retired to Senlis, where he purposed to spend a brief interval of repose after the labours and incredible anxieties of the past months.

Though from sound and patriotic reasons the king decreed the disbandment of his army, his intense anxiety to visit mademoiselle d'Estrées was, doubtless, also an actuating motive. Hence the enemies of Henri Quatre aver that as the rout of the German army under Dhona, during the preceding reign, was owing to Henry's weak passion for Corisandre d'Andouins, so the fascinations of Gabrielle d'Estrées now caused his majesty abruptly to abandon his victorious career. The king, who was unable to visit

[1] De Thou, liv. 99. Cayet, Davila, Cheverny, MSS Bibl. Imp. All these authors state their belief that the king from strategic reasons alone disbanded his army. MS. Bibl. Imp. F. de Béthune 9045—Lettre du roi au duc de Montpensier: in which Henry expressly gives these reasons for the temporary disbandment of his army.

Mantes, therefore despatched a command to the marquis de Cœuvres to join him at Senlis with his daughter, under pretext that M. d'Estrées might take the oaths of a privy counsellor, and his seat at the council-board. This command greatly chagrined mademoiselle d'Estrées, who was then suffering from a triple source of annoyance:— the reported passion of her affianced Bellegarde for mademoiselle de Guise; and the demand made by the duke de Longueville that she would restore his letters, which the duke feared might alike compromise him with the king, the duke de Bellegarde, and with his own betrothed bride. Lastly, mademoiselle d'Estrées endured with ill-dissembled anger and chagrin the attentions of king Henry, which she bitterly declared ruined her fame and her matrimonial prospects, by rendering impossible any of the great alliances proposed for her acceptance. Mademoiselle d'Estrées agreed to the request made by the duke de Longueville, on condition that she at the same time received back her own letters. The latter feigned consent; and repaired to Mantes to have an interview with Gabrielle. The duke de Longueville, however, whether unable to overcome his passion for mademoiselle d'Estrées; or actuated by the dishonourable motive of hereafter availing himself of the future influence of the latter with

the king, kept the most important letters of Gabrielle's correspondence, while receiving back every line which he himself had written. The transaction was not at first detected by mademoiselle d'Estrées; afterwards, when she reproached Longueville with his duplicity, the duke pretended that the letters were lost, and then promised to deliver them up at some future opportunity. From thenceforth Gabrielle became the bitter enemy of the duke; and rendered him all manner of evil services for what she termed "his unknightly and ungenerous artifice."[1]

Mademoiselle d'Estrées, therefore, when her father received the royal commands to repair to Senlis, went in no very amiable mood; as she attributed the conduct of M. de Longueville to his knowledge of Henry's pursuit. On her arrival at Senlis, Gabrielle therefore offered to defy the displeasure of the king, and unite herself privately to Bellegarde as the only means of "evading the evil designs of his majesty." Bellegarde hesitated; the wrath of the king, and the evident love of admiration which had been evinced by Gabrielle in accepting the homage of Longueville, had somewhat quenched the duke's ardour. Never-

[1] Dreux du Radier.—Vie de Gabrielle d'Estrées. Les Amours de Henri IV., écrits par Louise Marguerite de Lorraine-Guise Elzevir, Leyden, 1667.

theless, the conduct of mademoiselle d'Estrées in her intercourse with the king was guarded and commendable. She refused to meet his majesty in private; and in everything testified that she regarded the duke as her affianced husband. Henry, more and more enamoured, rendered mademoiselle d'Estrées every assiduity in his power. His presents she contumaciously returned; and when asked by his majesty to demand of him some favour for herself, or for her kindred, she demurely begged Henry to hasten her union with M. de Bellegarde, whom she regarded with an affection which nothing could alienate. The king, whose rectitude and honour ever succumbed before the enchantments of beauty, at length took the unjustifiable step of summoning Bellegarde to his presence, when Henry imperiously commanded the duke to relinquish his claim to the hand of Mlle. d'Estrées. His majesty said "that the duke was aware of his admiration for the latter: that, in short, he was king, and was minded to suffer no rival." "M. de Bellegarde! neither in war, politics, nor in love will I tolerate a rival. Heed my words!" The duke surveyed the irritated countenance of his royal master; obedience he perceived was

[1] Dreux du Radier—Vie de Gabrielle d'Estrées.—Les Amours de Henri IV., écrits par Louise Marguerite de Lorraine-Guise Elzevir, Leyden 1667.

inevitable. He promised, therefore, to quit Senlis without delay. When mademoiselle d'Estrées was informed of this interview and its results, she abandoned herself to transports of passion and tears. She lamented her unfortunate destiny; and deplored the charms which had attracted the fatal notice of the king. In vain M. d'Estrées respectfully remonstrated on the injury which his majesty inflicted on his daughter, by depriving her of so desirable an alliance: Henry persisted in demanding the absence of Bellegarde. The same afternoon, the king visited mademoiselle d'Estrées, to console and, if possible, moderate her anger. "Sire, it is useless; I will not listen to you. You exercise a cruel tyranny! You wish the ruin of my repute, and of my worldly fortunes. M. de Bellegarde offered me his hand in honourable marriage!" Gabrielle, during this interview, it is recorded, wept, and even knelt at Henry's feet in the ardour of her supplications. As the king continued unmoved in his resolution to forbid her union with the duke, mademoiselle d'Estrées angrily rose and left the apartment. During the night, Gabrielle, with great spirit, quitted Senlis, and retired to her father's castle of Cœuvres, near to Soissons; and steadily disregarded the peremptory letters of recall which, during the following day, were

despatched both by the king and by her father.[1]

King Henry was inconsolable. He bitterly reproached M. d'Estrées; and, it is believed, intimated his projects relative to mademoiselle d'Estrées from the systematic discountenance thenceforth given by the marquis to all suitors for the hand of his beautiful daughter. The capture of the town of Corbeil by the duke of Parma, roused the king from his aberration, and compelled him to attend once more to the military affairs of his realm.

As soon as the dukes learned the retreat of the royal army, they quitted their encampment at Pomponne, and crossing the Marne, encamped in the neighbourhood of Provins. From thence, on the 24th day of September they invested and besieged the important town of Corbeil.[2] The duke of Parma, meanwhile, had a great desire to see Paris. One day, therefore, he proposed, when riding at about six miles from the capital, attended by M. de Vitry and others

[1] Dreux du Radier.—Vie de Gabrielle d'Estrées. Le Grain, Décade d'Henri IV.

[2] "Le duc de Parme dépeignoit ses soldats pour autant d'Alexandres et de Césars capables pour conquérir un nouveau monde. Il donna des titres superbes à ses troupes. Il en appelloit les uns 'los Amutinados,' les autres 'los Maferidos' et autres nom enflés," writes a quaint author of the day, in a pamphlet published at Tours in 1590.

to enter the city *incognito*, and there spend one night. Vitry offered to attend him, and to entertain his highness. "*Allons!*" responded Farnese: "we will then visit a city which honours us with the appellation of Liberator." The duke was attended by the marquis de Renty[1] and by a suite of six personages. He entered Paris on Saturday, September 22nd, by the porte St. Antoine, and alighted at a hostelry in the rue de la Calandre, called the Iron Cross. The duke passed the remainder of the day in riding through the streets, attended by the marquis de Renty and by Vitry. His *incognito* was soon penetrated; but the people offered him no enthusiastic ovation. His cold and haughty demeanour confirmed the reports which had already reached the capital, respecting his dissensions with Mayenne. The following day, the duke visited the princesses, and went over the palaces of the Louvre, the Tuileries, and attended mass at Nôtre Dame. He then dined *tête-à-tête* with M. de Vitry, and departed during the afternoon for his camp at Provins.[2]

[1] Emanuel de Lalain, marquis de Renty, commander of the Spanish light horse.

[2] Mathieu—Hist. du Règne de Henri IV. liv. i.—Dondini, Vie du duc de Parme, Alexandre Farnese. The duke expressed his disappointment with Paris, but says an author, "le spectacle qu'offrait alors la capitale devoit produire cet effet. La majesté des tribuneaux étoit avilie. Les églises n'avoient plus d'orne-

On his way thither, Farnese reconnoitred Corbeil, and at once perceived that its capture, besides being an easy conquest, would augment the resources of the Parisians by opening to their purveyors several miles more of territory, and the navigation of the Seine as far as Melun. Without consulting his colleague Mayenne, the duke, therefore, sat down before Corbeil. The siege was of longer duration than Farnese expected, as it lasted from the 24th of September to the sixteenth day of the following month. During this interval, mutual jealousy and suspicion grew between the dukes. Farnese sarcastically reproached Mayenne with his misrepresentation of the condition of Henry's affairs; while the latter retorted by assuring the duke, "that the siege of a French city was a very different affair to the siege of a Flemish town, for that the terror of his name did not subdue the courage of Frenchmen!" The forays made by the Spanish troops likewise gave great offence to the peasantry. Farnese treated the surrounding district as hostile; and, therefore, a fair prey to wholesale pillage. Henry, on the contrary, respected the villages, and issued the severest orders against rapine; while his purveyors paid for all provisions brought into camp. The un-

ments. L'argent étoit si rare, que les marchands les plus accrédités n'en pouvaient obtenir à la banque d'Anvers qu'à 34 pour 100.

popularity of the Spaniards reached its climax after the surrender of Corbeil. The place was stormed amid terrible carnage. After the Spaniards entered, a horrible scene of violence and pillage ensued. The inhabitants were murdered; houses ransacked; and the owners tortured to extort confession where they had deposited their treasures: while whole districts of the town were recklessly fired.

On the news of the siege of Corbeil, Henry quitted Senlis and proceeded to Creil, from whence he repaired to Chaumont. On his route, the king defeated a detachment of Spanish troops under the sieurs de Lure and Baroni. Apprized of the fall of Corbeil, his majesty after the combat retired to Gisors to wait his opportunity. Farnese, meantime, wearied of the contradiction which he experienced from his Gallic allies; and disgusted at the little gratitude and enthusiasm demonstrated for Spain, announced his resolve to return into Flanders. Winter was approaching; and news of the enterprises of prince Maurice[1] in the Low Countries excited serious apprehension in the mind of the viceroy. Accordingly, leaving a Spanish garrison in Corbeil, Farnese set out on his march back to the frontiers on the 11th day of November, with the

[1] The prince captured the towns of Schelinberg and Welsembourg, besides numerous fortresses.

same deliberate purpose as had characterized his advance. Henry immediately prepared to pursue and harass his retreat; and sent orders for the duke de Nevers to join him with the army of Champagne. His majesty also wrote to M. de Givry, and by way of postscript to his letter, though irrelevant to any subject he had expatiated upon, inscribed on its margin the words "*Châtillon fut repris avec quatre eschelles.*" Givry, who was governor of Melun, interpreted Henry's words to refer to Corbeil;[1] and zealous for the royal cause, and the favour of his master—which had somewhat abated since the siege of Paris—he resolved to recapture the town or perish in the attempt. Accordingly, on the night of the 11th of November, when the duke of Parma was encamped in the neighbourhood of Fontenay, Givry and his gallant soldiers suddenly assaulted Corbeil. The walls were scaled; and after a bloody fight of five hours the place was reconquered, and the banners of the League and of Spain which crowned the summit of the fortress, hurled to the ground! The Spanish garrison was massacred; the inhabitants of the town aiding in inflicting retribution on their

[1] "Cela inspira à Givry la pensée d'en faire autant; un serviteur de bonne volonté entend à demi-mot," says Mathieu.—Hist. de Henri IV. The town of Châtillon or Castonel, was taken by Henry in the campaign of 1586. Henry III. his Court and Times, vol. ii.

"foreign tyrants." After the conquest of Corbeil the gallant Givry attacked Lagny, which surrendered at the first summons. Thus, ere Farnese quitted the district round Paris, his two most important conquests were recaptured; and the condition of the citizens of Paris remained the same as before his arrival—the possession of Corbeil and Lagny again re-establishing the blockade of the rivers Marne and Seine. This event renewed the agitation of the capital; and in great tribulation the city despatched a deputation to the duke of Parma, praying his highness to return and help them.[1] The duke de Mayenne, aghast at the rapidity with which the king had again become master of positions so important, joined in the petition. Farnese, however, sternly refused to retrace his steps. "Messieurs," said he, "the garrison left in Corbeil was insufficient, thanks to your jealousies and suspicion of the good faith of his Catholic majesty. I deemed you, nevertheless, to be the best judges of your own affairs; therefore suffer me in my turn to provide for the safety of this great army." The wily Spaniard, moreover, perceived that no positive benefit would ensue for his royal master by the continuance of that campaign. "I perceive," said he to Mendoza, "that the prince of Béarn wears out more boots than shoes; we

[1] De Thou, liv. 99.

must, therefore, exhaust him while making partisans at any cost, in all the great towns, and especially in Paris. Neither must his Catholic majesty send another army hither, excepting under the express condition that the Serene Infanta be proclaimed queen." The duke, nevertheless, yielded so far to the solicitations of Mayenne that he condescendingly promised, if possible, that another triumph on his road to Valenciennes should signalize his campaign. Farnese alluded to Château-Thierry, a town strongly fortified, possessing a castle filled with treasures of art. Henry, however, apprehensive lest a blow might be aimed in that quarter, hastily despatched the veteran La Noue with a detachment to reinforce the garrison. The duke of Parma therefore continued his march, and arrived at Fimes on the 16th of November.[1] His retreat was conducted with regularity and method. The duke de Mayenne and the troops of the League accompanied Farnese in ceremonious escort to the frontier. As yet the army had not been impeded in its march; but at Pont-Avere, where the Spaniards crossed the Aisne, Henry appeared at the head of a band of eight hundred chosen officers. La Noue meanwhile lay in wait for the enemy at the village of Bazoche with

[1] Montplainchain.—Hist. d'Alexandre Farnese, duc de Parme et de Plaisance, Amsterdam, 1592.

fifteen hundred men, part of the garrison of Château-Thierry. A warm skirmish ensued, led by the baron de Biron, which terminated in no decided advantage on either side. The king passed the night at Pontarsy; and early the following day his majesty proceeded to La Fère, where the duke de Nevers, Givry, and the marquis de Parabère,[1] awaited him with reinforcements.

It was here, that most romantic incident in Henry's life occurred—his adventurous visit to Cœuvres to visit Gabrielle d'Estrées. The king's solicitude had been extreme since the abrupt departure of mademoiselle d'Estrées from Senlis. Gabrielle sent no reply to his missives; while M. d'Estrées stated that his daughter was still irritated at the rupture of her marriage with Bellegarde, and refused to pardon any person concerned in the exile of the duke. The resistance offered by mademoiselle d'Estrées to the suit, which in those degenerate days was considered by many of the fairest ladies of the court an enviable distinction, inflamed the passion of the king. The desire to propitiate Gabrielle, and to hear the words of pardon from her lips, distracted the mind of Henry; moreover, his majesty was haunted by the fear lest the duke de Bellegarde might yet

[1] Jean de Baudrans, marquis de Parabère, created a marshal of France, 14th September, 1622.

with manly courage effect the rescue of his betrothed. Resolved to offer to mademoiselle d'Estrées some dazzling mark of devotion, the king determined to pay a visit to the château of Cœuvres, distant about twenty-four miles from La Fère. When Henry made his project known to those amongst his band of nobles with whom he was most intimate, their astonishment and disapprobation were unequivocally notified. The way from La Fère to Cœuvres, which was three miles from Soissons, was beset with hostile garrisons. The town of Soissons was occupied by the League; in short, the cavaliers to whom the king confided his Quixotic project, were lost in amazement at the rashness of the design, and were with difficulty prevented from revealing it to the duke de Nevers. Henry, however, gave them no leisure for reflection; he quitted La Fère privately at dawn, November 18th, with about twelve cavaliers. Amongst these young nobles were Givry, Biron, Rosny, and others. Biron undertook to ride forwards to notify to mademoiselle d'Estrées the approaching visit of the king, and afterwards to meet and guide his majesty to the château. At a little village about nine miles from Cœuvres, Henry left his suite of gentlemen, and performed the remainder of the road on foot and in disguise. The dangerous vicinity of Soissons, and the risk

of capture from the foraging parties sent by the garrison to scour the neighbourhood, rendered this precaution requisite. The king, therefore, exchanged his habit for the coarse garb of a peasant, which had been provided by Biron, and left by him at a little roadside hostelry. Henry then boldly commenced his perilous expedition; and to render his disguise complete he trudged along carrying a sack of straw on his head. The château of Cœuvres was situated on the confines of a dense wood; it was unfortified, and protected from the assaults of the neighbouring garrison by an order from the duke de Mayenne, under whom the marquis de Cœuvres had once served. It was deemed most prudent for the king to traverse this wood, rather than expose himself to the chance of recognition on the high road from the officers of any of the enemy's detachments. About the middle of the wood, Henry was met by Biron, who gave his majesty the welcome news that the château was close at hand, and mademoiselle d'Estrées prepared to receive his visit. The extreme amazement of Gabrielle, on learning this fresh *escapade* in homage to her charms on the part of the king, did not however deprive her of self-possession. She was sojourning at Cœuvres with her sister, madame de Villars, a haughty and ambitious

woman, who had encouraged Gabrielle in her resistance to the king, because to be duchesse de Bellegarde seemed more advantagous than "to bask for a while in the fleeting sunshine of royal favour." Gabrielle, accompanied by her sister, received the king in a low gallery opening on to a balcony to which a flight of steps ascended from a garden. Henry left Biron in charge of his sack of straw, and repaired alone to the interview. His reception was cold and ungracious. Mademoiselle d'Estrées being fastidious to excess, gazed with disdain on his majesty's plebeian attire which she declared, "gave him so grotesque an aspect, that she could not look upon him without laughing." Nevertheless, the homage of so great a monarch and hero, the flattery and promises made by Henry, and the romantic circumstances of their interview, somewhat softened the heart of Gabrielle. To no other woman had the king devoted a pursuit so fervent and determined.[1] Gabrielle felt that every hope of her alliance with Bellegarde had vanished; and that in addition to the commands of the king, the duke's own

[1] "Contre un pouvoir si grand qu'eut pu faire d'Estrées.
Par une charme indomptable elle était attirée;
Elle avait à combattre, en ce funeste jour,
Sa jeunesse, son cœur, un héros, et l'amour!"
La Henriade.

jealous fears would now effectually separate them. Gabrielle, therefore, though she quitted the gallery, leaving the king and madame de Villars with the mutinous words, "that she had nothing to say or to debate with his majesty, who looked so ill that she could not endure to fix her eyes upon him,"[1] returned after the space of ten minutes to offer his majesty refreshment. Henry accepted a cup of wine and a slice of bread from the fair hands of Gabrielle, but declined other viands. The king afterwards took leave; for the panic would have been great at La Fère after nightfall, the king being mysteriously absent. "I have good heart after this interview, that nothing will go wrong with me, but all things prosper," said Henry to madame de Villars. "I am going to pursue the enemy, and in a day or two *ma belle* will hear what gallant exploits I have accomplished for love of her!"[2] In addition to the favourable change which Henry fancied that he detected in the manner of mademoiselle d'Estrées, his conversation with madame de Villars during the absence of Gabrielle, had greatly elated his majesty. Madame de Villars, fearing that her sister's

[1] Les Amours de Henri IV. par Louise Marguerite de Lorraine.

[2] Mathieu—Hist. de Henri IV. Le Grain, Décade de Henri IV.

coldness might thoroughly offend his majesty, offered Henry plausible excuses, by which she prayed the king to pardon Gabrielle's inexperience, her want of courtly reverence and shy reserve, which she said proceeded from dread of the anger of her father and of M. de Bellegarde. Madame de Villars resembled her sister, the abbess of Maubuisson: she was artful and jealous; and as events afterwards proved, believed that the favour which her sister refused, was the most desirable boon of fortune that could happen to any lady of the court. The character of mademoiselle d'Estrées was gentle and affectionate: her temper, excepting when moved by such extreme provocations as those which she had recently endured, was equable and calm. She was just and considerate; and excelled in many accomplishments. Until after she had attracted the notice of the king, not a blot rests on the repute of mademoiselle d'Estrées; which in this age of intrigue and libel, proclaims more than ordinary virtue in a woman of Gabrielle's beauty—one who thereby captivated innumerable suitors. Mademoiselle d'Estrées, however, was ambitious beyond measure. Her manners wer eexquisite in polished refinement and modesty. Her dress was chosen with taste and skill so as to display "the dazzling lustre of a complexion, pure as

the limpid stream, fresh as an egg, and transparent as a pearl."[1]

The king, meantime, returned to La Fère tolerably well content with his expedition, "having performed this most perilous journey to purchase a woman's smiles at the risk of his crown, his kingdom, and of his own life, and the lives of his friends and companions," says a contemporary author, who expatiates with great asperity on the weakness of his majesty for his fair subjects. Henry's absence had been discovered by the duke de Nevers; and great was the perturbation of those lords, cognizant of his majesty's strange disappearance. Had the duke of Parma and Mayenne assailed the royal quarters at La Fère, it were difficult to say what fatal misfortune the beauty of Gabrielle might not have entailed upon France! Luckily, Henry returned uninjured, less restless in mind, and burning to perform some mighty feat of arms to confirm the favourable impression made on the heart of mademoiselle d'Estrées.

[1] The poet Porchères; he also composed a sonnet on the eyes of Gabrielle d'Estrées. He says,

"Ce ne sont pas des *yeux*, ce sont plutôt des *dieux*
Ils ont dessus les rois la puissance absolue.
Dieux! Non, ce sont des *cieux*, ils ont la couleur bleue!
Et le movement prompt, comme celui des cieux."

Muses Françoises, p. 286.

On the morrow, Henry again set forth from La Fère in pursuit of the enemy. The royal army consisted of three thousand men— a force, when commanded by a prince so skilled in the tactics of the period, sufficiently large to inflict severe loss on a retreating enemy. In fact, the king's activity greatly incommoded Farnese: the deliberate and systematic military laws which guided the viceroy's marches, were often roughly violated by the *guerilla* warfare which it pleased his majesty to wage. Along the route of the Spanish army, the dead and dying were left to the compassion of the infuriated peasantry; who too frequently meted to these unfortunate captives the same degree of mercy which they themselves had experienced from the Spaniards. Henry came up to the Spanish army at a place situated almost on the frontier called l'Arbre de Guise, close to Marle. His eager desire for the conflict was so great, that he arrived first on the ground, within sight of their retreating columns, attended only by forty gentlemen. The divisions under Biron and the duke de Longueville coming up, an immediate attack was made on the rear-guard. A severe conflict ensued, in which Biron being unhorsed, the king himself gallantly led a charge for his rescue. Upon this, the Spanish troops finding themselves hotly pressed and isolated from the

main body of the army—which by the command of the duke, continued steadily to advance towards the frontier—threw down their arms and fled in pursuit of their comrades, leaving on the field, arms, baggage waggons, two cannons, and the bodies of the slain. "If the royal cavalry had come up in time," says De Thou, "it was believed by many, that this rout would have been followed by the defeat of the invading army." Several banners and other rich spoils found on the field, were despatched by Henry as a trophy of his exploit to mademoiselle d'Estrées.

The following day, December 1st, 1590, Farnese and his Spaniards reached the bourne so eagerly anticipated—the Flemish frontier. The king, therefore, retired to St. Quentin, and made his entry into the town in military state. The dukes of Parma and de Mayenne bade each other farewell near Landrecy, and ceremoniously embraced in sight of the armies.[1] Farnese delivered a pompous oration to the regiments which were to remain in the pay of the League; and promised to return early during the follow-

[1] "Ainsi en frayeur, avec honte, et avec un aigre repentir d'estre entrez en France, le dict duc de Parme á été chassé; laissant le bon duc de Mayenne, du quel il adviendra pour son retour ce qu'il plaira à Dieu!" ironically writes the author of the Discours sur la venue de M. de Parme.

ing spring to complete his conquest. The duke of Parma then continued his march to Brussels; for the successes of prince Maurice during the campaign in France had seriously disquieted the Spanish government.[1]

[1] Cayet—Chron. Novennaire.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

1590—1591.

Condition of the country.—Anxieties of the king.—Demise of Sixtus V.—The conclave.—Election of Urban VII.—His demise and elevation of Gregory XIV.—Attempt to surprise St. Denis.—Repulse and death of the chevalier d'Aumale.—Gabrielle d'Estrées.—Her marriage.—Promise made by the king.—Enterprise on Paris.—Arrival of madame de Liancour at Chauny.—Exile of M. de Liancour.—Position of parties.—Siege of Chartres.—Negotiations of Turenne in England and Germany.—The count de Soissons and Madame.—Correspondence of the king with madame de Guiche.—Overtures of the Seize to pope Gregory.—Nomination of Landriano as cardinal-legate in France.—Negotiations of the cardinal de Bourbon with the Holy See.—The Tiers-Parti.—Its designs and prospects.—Succours granted by pope Gregory to the League.—Surrender of Chartres.—Entry of the legate into Paris.—His mission.—Embarrassments of the duke de Mayenne.

THE failure of the blockade of Paris, and the entrance of the duke of Parma into France, were events which temporarily retarded the progress of the royal cause. In Languedoc, the duke de Montmorency was arming slowly. The most powerful of the belligerents of the southern

provinces, the duke, aware of the precarious position of the sovereign, trusted to win by his delays the much-coveted sword of constable of France. Henry, however, wisely resolved that this eminent dignity should be the reward of loyal service, and not a bribe to purchase lukewarm fealty. In Dauphiny, the duke de Joyeuse[1] and Lesdiguières disputed for supremacy; a contest which at the close of the year 1590, was decided by the capture of Grenoble by the latter. In Provence, the territorial feuds between the duke d'Epernon, his brother La Valette, and the countess de Sault,[2] terminated in the temporary triumph of the duke de Savoye, who made his entry with extraordinary pomp into the town of Aix. This invasion was aided and promoted by the Spanish cabinet; the Catholic king permitting levies to be made by the duke de Savoye throughout the Milanese. Philip also furnished his son-in-law with a fleet of forty-seven galleys to blockade the ports of Toulon and

[1] Antoine Scipion, second duke de Joyeuse, brother of Joyeuse who was killed at Coutras.

[2] Chrétienne d'Aguerre, widow of Antoine de Blancfort de Créquy, seigneur de St. Janvier, heir of the cardinal de Créquy, his uncle. The countess married secondly the count de Sault. Her son by her second husband died, and left his immense heritage to his mother, who bequeathed it to her son by her first husband Charles de Créquy, prince de Poix. The countess died in 1611.

Marseilles. In Bretagne the progress of disaffection, and the treasonable league of the duke de Mercœur with the Spaniards excited lively apprehensions. A force of 5000 Spanish troops landed at Blavet; and joining the army of the League under Mercœur, captured Hennebon. Henry's lieutenant the prince de Dombes, proved himself equal to the emergency. Gallant and able, his energy arrested the advance of the invaders, and held them in check until the arrival of succours from England, placed the prince in condition to commence hostilities by the siege of Lamballe. The midland provinces of the kingdom were occupied by the armies of the king and of the League. From one end of the realm to the other all things were shrouded in the desolation of warfare. Terror, privation, and the ruinous length of the war, converted the once peaceful and prosperous citizen into the fierce marauder, whose bread was the daily gain of rapine and of violence. Few of the cities of the realm had escaped the horrors and devastation of a siege. The churches were desecrated by seditious assemblages; the priesthood used their pulpits to advocate rebellion and to sanction crime; while in the confessionals of the realm, absolution was withholden, until every penitent had bound himself by oaths to exterminate heresy in the person of the arch-heretic Henri Le Béarnois, *soi-*

disant king of France. Henry's hereditary principality of Béarn was the only province which at this period enjoyed even the semblance of tranquillity. The people, though continually tempted to revolt by the agents of the Spanish king, remained passive under the mild sway of Madame Catherine: yet in Béarn even, domestic affairs prevented the harassed mind of the king from dwelling with satisfaction on this comparapative prosperity. The intimate *liaison* which existed between the princess and the count de Soissons, and which Henry apprehended might terminate in the secret marriage of his sister and heiress, continually excited his apprehension. The subtle and enterprising temper of Soissons, rendered the latter peculiarly disliked by the king.[1] Moreover, the count was rightly suspected by Henry of entertaining designs on the crown. Orthodox in his faith, a prince of the blood royal, and the only brother of the deceased prince of Condé who seemed eligible to wear the crown, the intrigues of the count de Soissons had long excited misgivings in the mind of the king. The princess inherited her mother's stern character; and had repeatedly expressed her re-

[1] "Tous les événements paraissaient au comte de Soissons autant de degrés pour parvenir à ses fins; jamais il n'y a eu d'ambition plus demesurée, ni plus aveugle. Inquiet, chagrin, jaloux, son ambition se nourrissait de tout, et ne profitait de rien."—Sully, liv. v.

solve either to bestow her hand on the count or to lead a life of celibacy. She passionately refused to peruse the letters of expostulation addressed to her by her brother; and caused Henry's missives on the subject to be returned to him by madame de Guiche, whose interference in this affair occasioned her complete fall from royal favour. Fortunately for king Henry, the malice of his enemies, so diverse and powerful, was neutralized by their divisions. In the battle-field, at the council board, in his hours of relaxation, jealousies and discord beset the king. The canker at the heart of the League, and which enabled Henry eventually to triumph over that mighty confederation, was the feud between Mayenne and the ex-council of the Seize. Montmorency, Epernon, Turenne, jealously resented the ascendency of Biron, whose own arrogance was held somewhat in check by dread of their formidable rivalry. D'O hated M. de Rosny, but refrained from daring pecuniary appropriations in fear of the vigilant scrutiny of the latter. The dread of Spanish ascendency rivetted the alliance offensive and defensive between the English and French crowns. Queen Elizabeth, therefore, diligently aided the Flemish confederates, and sent a fleet to La Rochelle. During the course of the year 1591, the jealousy between the count de Soissons and his brother the

cardinal de Bourbon[1] partly caused the failure of the formidable Tiers-Parti, a faction so hostile to the royal claims of Henry IV. The tact and good humour of the king eminently served his cause during these complications. Henry possessed the rare faculty of demonstrating complete forgetfulness of injuries when oblivion suited his interests. He could jest with, and even overwhelm by delicate distinctions the individual, to defeat whose hostile machinations the whole power of his arms or his diplomacy had been recently directed. He had, moreover, certain chosen counsellors from whose advice he rarely deviated, however he might appear to dissent and temporize. These counsellors during the wars of the League were the marshal de Biron, Rosny, Cheverny, and the secretary of state Revol. Turenne and the duke de Nevers also possessed great influence with his majesty. To the latter, indeed, the greater portion of Henry's correspondence during the years 1591-2, now extant, is addressed.

The demise of pope Sixtus V.,[2] meanwhile,

[1] The cardinal de Vendôme took the name of Bourbon, on the the demise of his uncle, the king of the League.

[2] Pope Sixtus died August 27th, 1590. Henry exclaimed on learning the demise of the pontiff:—"Voilà un tour de la politique Espagnole; j'ai perdu un pape qui étoit à moi." Sixtus used to assert, that there were but three true kings in Europe—himself, Henry IV., and Queen Elizabeth. "Que veut faire ce moine de tant d'argent!" often exclaimed Philip II., in reference to the pontifical treasures.

added to the disorder and consternation everywhere prevalent during the last months of the year 1590. This event took place on Saturday, August 27th, in the palace of Monte Cavallo. The death of the pope was hastened, it was said, by a draught of iced sherbet, which his holiness drank while suffering under an access of fever. The notorions disagreements subsisting between the papal and the Spanish cabinets, added to the the threats addressed to Sixtus by Philip II., occasioned dark surmises as to the origin of the malady under which his holiness succumbed. The genuine admiration and forbearance evinced by Sixtus for Henri Quatre; and his steady refusal to assist the League, by arms or by donation of a part of his treasure, had greatly exasperated king Philip. In Paris, the news of the pope's death was received with satisfaction. Boucher, from his pulpit of St. Benôit, declared that the event was one worthy of thanksgiving; inasmuch as such were the pernicious designs of his holiness, that the clergy of the capital must in a few months have found themselves compelled to refuse obedience to the Holy See. The Jesuit Rouillet, in an oration delivered at Bourges, termed Sixtus "heretic, a miserly priest, a panderer of heresy." On the demise of Sixtus, the powers of his legate Gaëtano ceased; and immediately after

the raising of the siege of Paris, that turbulent prelate departed for Rome. The ardour with which he had espoused Spanish interests rendered the cardinal anxious to claim his reward—the all-powerful intervention of the Spanish envoy the duke de Sessa, for his elevation to the papal chair. Before leaving Paris, Gaëtano proposed to nominate Séga,[1] bishop of Placentia, as vice-legate and nuncio. The Seize, however, refused to acknowledge the legatine capacity of Séga, who had hitherto played a subordinate part in the cabals of the capital. After much debate, it was agreed that that prelate should be regarded as the political agent only of the Holy See until the pleasure of the new pope could be ascertained. On the 25th of August, Gaëtano had quitted Paris, attended by Panigarola and Bellarmine. He first proceeded to Corbeil to visit the duke of Parma, and to introduce to Mayenne a deputation from the ex-council of Forty. From Corbeil the legate was escorted by the count de Chaligny to Verdun; at which place he received a despatch notifying the election of the cardinal de St. Marcel Giovanni Baptista de Castagna, to the tiara, who took the name of Urban VII. The new pope confirmed the appointments of his

[1] Philippo Séga, bishop of Placentia in Spain, cardinal of St. Onuphius. This prelate died in 1596, highly esteemed by the Holy See, for piety and energy.

predecessor; and appeared resolved to model his policy on that of Sixtus, especially in his tenacious guard of the much-coveted treasure coffers of St. Angelo. The day following his election, Urban complained of slight indisposition. The malady of his holiness augmented; and after the expiration of thirteen days, he expired. The sudden demise of pope Urban occasioned extraordinary sensation. Rome was filled with sinister speculation; the Spanish faction in the conclave, headed by the cardinal Madrucci, intrigued, bribed, and menaced. Cardinal Montalto, nephew of Sixtus V., at the head of twenty-six cardinals created during the pontificate of Sixtus, entered into correspondence with the duke de Piney-Luxembourg, and claimed the political support of Henri Quatre. The conclave assembled on the 8th of October. The most open and shameless influence was exercised by the Spanish ambassador. Philip espoused the interests of the cardinals Santorio, Paleotti, Madrucci, and Gaëtano; and expressly excluded, by name, the cardinals de Medici, Salviati, and Lauro, whose election "his Spanish majesty could never acquiesce in." After a session, notorious for its stormy intrigue, during which the cardinals Marco Colonna, Julio Sanotrio, and Paleotto were respectively on the eve of being elected to

the pontifical throne, the suffrages of the assembly suddenly united for the elevation of Sfondrata cardinal-bishop of Cremona—a Milanese, and the subject born of Spain. Sordid cupidity and lust of dominion was the spirit which had actuated the members of the sacred college, rather than the promptings of that divine inspiration which, it was pretended, guided the election of the universal father of Christendom. The first act of the new pope, who took the name of Gregory XIV., was to bestow a benefaction of a thousand gold crowns upon each of the cardinals, to indemnify them, as his holiness said, for the expenses of the conclave. Gregory entered into the closest relations with the Spanish ambassador; and reserved for future consideration the letter addressed to him by Henry's envoy, the duc de Luxembourg, who, during the conclave, had visited Florence to confer with the duke de Retz, and to induce the latter, if possible, actively to espouse the royal cause. Luxembourg presently notified to the king the impossibility of extorting any satisfactory declaration from the pope; who, despite his urgent pleadings, coldly signified his intention to accredit a nuncio extraordinary to the realm of France, when the sentiments of the Holy See would be amply developed.

The propositions made to Mayenne at Corbeil,

by the deputies of the Seize, served, on the other hand, not a little to embarrass the duke. The curé Boucher presented the address, and made a long oration in support of its articles. The Seize demanded the reorganization of the council of Forty; a close and loyal alliance with Spain; the dismissal of the duke's present counsellors; the reconstruction of the supreme courts; the abolition of titles of royalty; while the demolition of the castles of the ancient *noblesse* was recommended. Mayenne took the petition, glanced at its signatures, and promised to consider the demands of his faithful Parisians. When the deputies had retired, the duke assembled his council, and laid the memorial before the archbishop of Lyons. "We will remember the advice of MM. de Paris," said Mayenne ironically. "Tear the document to shreds. We divine their purpose."[1] Boucher and his colleagues remained eight days in the camp; and were finally dismissed without a reply to their memorial. The duke also forbade any of the deputies to visit the duke of Parma. This prohibition was evaded by Boucher, who under pretext of conferring with the legate Séga, the latter being then in the Spanish camp, obtained several interviews with Farnese.

In Paris, meanwhile, the party termed Les

[1] Etoile, Journal de Henri IV. Cayet, Villeroy, t. i.

Politiques, began to exhibit symptoms of revival. The dearth and public discontent imparted greater acrimony to the feuds of the chieftains of faction. The duke de Nemours sympathised little with the designs of Mayenne; and was suspected by his brother of advocating the union of the young duke de Guise with the infanta, and their proclamation as joint sovereigns of France. Such was believed to be the secret aim of the duchesses de Nemours and de Montpensier. The diplomacy of Mendoza, and the intemperate zeal of the chevalier d'Aumale further complicated affairs. The suspicion that the adherents of the king, and those personages headed by Villeroy who were ready to acknowledge Henry's royal title on his conversion, were secretly plotting with Mayenne, infuriated the demagogues of the Hôtel de Ville. At the commencement of January, 1591, it was therefore resolved to surprise the town of St. Denis, which had just received a new governor, in the person of M. de St. Vic, an able soldier, whose prowess had, nevertheless, to be demonstrated. St. Denis captured, it was determined to arrest and convey thither all the suspected persons, whose residence in Paris had become inconvenient, and imprison them within the precincts of the town. The chief defence of St. Denis was its broad moat: the fortifications of the town were

weak, being the same hastily raised by Biron after the second evasion of the duke d'Alençon during the late reign. The cold was now so intense that this moat was frozen. The city wall being low, might, it was said, in several places be cleared at a bound by a horseman, should the latter be able to traverse the ice of the moat. The chevalier d'Aumale had formerly entertained relations with a woman of the name of La Raverie, who now resided at St. Denis. By the counsel of this person, at midnight on the eve of Ste. Geneviève, d'Aumale quitted Paris with 800 men and 200 horse, and boldly traversing the frozen moat, approached close under the walls of St. Denis without meeting obstacle. The surprise was complete, the soldiers scaled the walls, and with shouts of "*Tue! tue!*" poured into the streets, and made towards the abbey. The principal gate being meantime battered under the direction of the chevalier, his horsemen likewise entered St. Denis. M. de Vic, sallied forth to repulse the invaders, and a bloody fight commenced. The troops of the Union at first maintained their ground, but were gradually beaten back by their assailants. The victory was achieved by a vigorous attack made by a party of de Vic's soldiery in the rear of the enemy; and by the re-capture of the gate.

In the *melée*, the chevalier d'Aumale was slain with twenty officers. His body was identified by madame la Raverie. M. de Vic caused the remains to be temporarily deposited in the abbey of St. Denis, in the chapelle de St. Martin, where the corpse was covered with the pall used at the interment of the late duke d'Alençon.[1] The failure of this enterprise, the death of Aumale, and the disgraceful repulse from St. Denis, filled the citizens of Paris with consternation. During the attack, the princesses had performed vigil before the shrine of Ste. Geneviève; and presented offerings to propitiate the favour of the saint. A few days subsequently, the body of the chevalier d'Aumale, was delivered for interment in the church of St. Jean-en-Grève. On raising the corpse to place it in the coffin, it was found to have been mutilated by rats; a circumstance which afforded the Parisians a subject for innumerable epigrams and witticisms,[2]

[1] Mém. de Cheverny, année 1591. De Thou, liv. 101. Davila, liv. 12.—Cheverny states that the chevalier d'Aumale was killed in the house of madame la Raverie.

[2] See Etoile, Journal de Henri IV. The following is one of the epitaphs:—

Saint Antoine pillé par un chef des Unis
Alla comme au plus fort se plaindre à St. Denis
Qui lui a de ce tort la vengeance promise.
Un peu de temps après ce Pillard entreprit
De prendre St. Denis; mais St. Denis le prit
Et vengea dessus lui l'une et l'autre entreprise.

though a great parade of mourning was made for the demise of their champion.

The king was at Senlis, when the news of the repulse on the town of St. Denis reached him. His majesty's content was unbounded; especially as an hour before the arrival of the officer sent by M. de Vic, false intelligence had reached Senlis of the defeat of the royal troops. The king commanded a solemn Te Deum to be chanted in the cathedral, which the orthodox nobles attended; while Henry was present at a thanksgiving service performed by the minister Des Amours. The king bestowed the wealthy abbey of Bec, in the diocese of Lisieux, which had appertained to the chevalier d'Aumale, on the brave de Vic.[1] His majesty also wrote a letter to the duke de Nevers, highly commending this valiant exploit.

Henry's domestic tranquillity was again troubled during the month of January, 1591, by his attachment to mademoiselle d'Estrées. The king had so publicly avowed his sentiments, that all France was cognizant of the fact, from qneen Marguerite on her rock of Usson, to the countess de Guiche, in Béarn. The fair fame of the beautiful Gabrielle was irrevocably sullied,

[1] Dominique de Vic, seigneur d'Ermenoville, died in 1610, without leaving posterity. His consort was Jeanne de Maramvilliers, dame de Mareuil.

as few persons credited the report of her reluctance to accept the royal suit. The duke de Bellegarde feigning probably a prudent disbelief in the fidelity of his betrothed bride, broke off relations with the marquis d'Estrées, and even returned him his daughter's letters and her portrait. M. d'Estrées, therefore, determined to save the honour of his house by recourse to the corrupt practice of those days under such contingency—he selected a husband for his daughter; and signified to Gabrielle his resolve to employ compulsion in case she ventured to disobey his command. Having thus fulfilled his paternal duty, the marquis said, "that he washed his hands of the affair, and left the issue to the conscience of the parties concerned." The personage selected by M. d'Estrées for his son-in-law, was Nicholas d'Armerval, baron de Liancour, whose previous suit to Gabrielle, like that of M. de Villars, had been rejected for the more brilliant proposals of Bellegarde. Monsieur de Liancour was considerably older than Mlle. d'Estrées, and a widower with nine children: but his descent was illustrious, and his wealth great. He was, however, illiterate, feeble in mind, and repulsive in person. His character may be at once appreciated by the fact that he was willing to espouse mademoiselle d'Estrées, though aware that the pursuit of the king was the

cause of the rupture of her engagement with the duke de Bellegarde. Under these circumstances, the honour and resolution of mademoiselle d'Estrées succumbed. She had lost every hope of being united to her lover Bellegarde, who had abandoned her to her fate; and she beheld herself on the eve of a compulsory marriage with an individual whom she despised.

In vain, in her distress she appealed to the king. Henry replied, "he felt that as yet his sceptre was not potent enough to enable him to interfere authoritatively in the private affairs of subjects such as Estrées and Liancour; but on her slightest command, he gave her the word of a king, that he would cause her to be carried away to a place of safety within one hour after the celebration of her espousals with M. de Liancour." From thenceforth Gabrielle accepted her destiny: the blandishments of her royal lover, the counsels of her sister madame de Villars, and of her aunt madame de Sourdis, vanquished her lingering reluctance. Her marriage with M. de Liancour was celebrated at Cœuvres at the commencement of January, 1591.[1] Her preparations for instant flight to join the king were sedulously concealed from her father, for outwardly M. d'Estrées chose to assume

[1] Dreux du Radier.—Vie de Gabrielle d'Estrées. St. Simon.

an austere deportment, which his daughter then failed to comprehend. The nuptial day passed, however, and no token indicated that Henry was about to fulfil his promise.[1] In vain the beautiful bride gazed eagerly from the windows of her apartment to descry the white banner of the escort, which was to convey her to Senlis from the arms of the bridegroom she loathed. Instead of hastening to perform his promise to madame de Liancour, the king was on his road to Paris! The broils consequent on the demise of the chevalier d'Aumale, and the failure of the enterprise against St. Denis, offered a favourable juncture for the execution of a project to surprise the city, long contemplated by his majesty. Henry hesitated not a moment. His love, the distress of Gabrielle all yielded to his sense of the magnitude of the proposed triumph, now that its execution was deemed expedient.

Immediately, after the attack on St. Denis, the duke de Nevers raised the siege of Provins and retired to Lagny, under pretext that his health was too feeble to endure the privations of a winter campaign. At the same

[1] Du Perron composed some verses on the occasion, in the name of mademoiselle d'Estrées, more applauded by his majesty than by any of his virtuously disposed subjects, commencing with the line:—

"A qui me donnez vous, vous à qui je me donne."

Muse Française, Recueil par Espinelle.

time, the duke d'Epernon, who now anxiously desired to reinstate himself in the royal favour by some notable service, offered to reinforce the garrison of St. Denis. The movements of two such noted captains were diligently watched by M. de Belin governor of Paris, who, in the absence of the duke de Nemours, remained invested with the sole responsibility of the defence of the capital. Belin had several able officers under his command, including M. de Tremblecourt: moreover, he was independent and not amenable, like the princes of Lorraine—Mayenne excepted—to the dictation of madame de Montpensier; an influence which more than once had been perniciously exercised. Apprehensive, therefore, of some stratagem to account for the unusual movement of the royal forces in the vicinity of the capital, Belin took admirable means for strengthening the defences and increasing the watch on the city walls. The surprise was attempted on the night of January 20th. Twenty officers, disguised as peasants and driving asses laden with bags of flour, approached the porte St. Honoré at three o'clock in the morning, and knocked for admittance. Behind, came a train of carts, waggons, and horses, driven by soldiers in disguise, whose design it was to rush forwards on the opening of the gate and block up the passage. The

baron de Biron followed, at the head of a body of 800 men and 400 horse; while strong detachments under La Noue, Givry, and Marivaux were posted ready to support their colleagues in the expected conflict. The regiments of Swiss occupied the faubourg St. Honoré; while the king on foot, attended by the dukes de Longueville and Epernon, watched the result of the stratagem at the entrance of the suburb. The duke de Nevers took the command of a squadron of cavalry, posted on the road between Paris and St. Denis. All things being thus disposed, the answer of the garrison of Paris to the summons of the false flour venders was eagerly awaited. The *ruse*, however, was discovered by the wary Tremblecourt, who replied that the city gate could not be opened at that unusual hour; but desired that the merchants would go lower down the river, and cross at the ferry. After an interval of suspense, a great tumult broke forth in the town. The church bells pealed, lights flitted in every direction, and the ramparts swarmed with men. The king thereupon, after a brief conference, resolved to retreat. Accordingly, the royal troops were gradually withdrawn from the faubourgs, so that at dawn no vestige remained of the expedition. The panic in the capital, however, was intense; and the people, transported at their deliverance, vowed yearly

to celebrate the anniversary of *La Journée des Farines*, as the enterprise was named from the sacks of flour which the disguised soldiers carried.[1] Mendoza took advantage of the panic to propose that Spanish troops should garrison Paris, and thus guarantee the citizens from similar enterprises. The Seize applauded and commissioned the ambassador to propose the measure to the duke de Mayenne. The duke, alarmed at the activity of the king, no longer showed so decided a disapprobation, provided that the Spaniards admitted into Paris did not exceed 4,000 men. He, however, referred the subject to the parliament of Paris; the members of which unanimously agreed to accept a succour, requisite, as it was said, to guard their homes, their city, and their substance from the predatory attacks of Le Béarnnois. The concession, however, was most unpalatable to the royal adherents and the party termed Les Politiques. When the Spanish regiments entered Paris on the 11th of the following month of February, the troops in many districts of the city were pelted and greeted with execrations. Such was the condition of the public mind, that the restless and unruly phantasy of the moment had power to ex-

[1] Cayet—Chron. Novennaire, t. i, De Thou, liv. 101. Etoile Journal de Henri IV., D'Aubigné—Hist. Universelle, t. iii.

tinguish every feeling of patriotism and consistency.

Henry returned immediately to Senlis, and from thence he proceeded to Chauny. His majesty's first care was to respond to the passionate epistle addressed to him by madame de Liancour. Time was precious: and already the royal army under Biron was on its march to besiege the important town of Chartres; the which, with its surrounding fertile district, called Le Pays Chartrain, furnished abundant provision to the Parisians. Henry accordingly despatched a mandate commanding M. de Liancour to join the camp at Chauny, and to bring his wife. Not a day of grace was conceded: even the very hour when he was to enter the presence is stated to have been indicated by the missive. The tears and threats of his reluctant bride, and her undisguised hatred and contempt had rendered the few days which M. de Liancour passed in her society the reverse of halcyon. He, therefore, yielded obedience to a mandate which he dared not dispute, and repaired to Chauny. The following day, a royal order exiled M. de Liancour from court; and indicated as his future residence a castle which appertained to him in Limousin, to which he departed without being permitted even a parting interview with his wife. From thenceforth Gabrielle d'Estrées

reigned over the court of Henri Quatre, who daily seemed more and more fascinated by her charms. She was attended by her aunt madame de Sourdis, and by her cousin mademoiselle de la Bourdaisière. Madame de Sourdis initiated her niece in the arts requisite to maintain her favour. Gabrielle ruled the king by mingled disdain and submission; and from the period of her instalment at court, no other lady presumed to dispute her empire. Her light humour and *badinage* enchanted the king: her jealousy afforded infinite amusement to his majesty; while the splendid beauty of madame de Liancour eclipsed that of every other woman of the court. One of the most obsequious of madame Gabrielle's flatterers in the early days of her power was the abbé du Perron, who had filled the office of reader to the late king. The future famous cardinal had taken the abbé Desportes as his master in the poetic art; and rivalled the latter in the licence of his verse. His poems on the romantic incidents connected with madame de Liancourt recommended him to the special notice of Henry; who afterwards took such pleasure in the discourse of the abbé, that he sanctioned his nomination as chaplain and confessor to madame Gabrielle. Du Perron was eloquent and versed in the science of the casuist. He was the intimate friend of Bellarmine; and so perfect is

said to have been his faculty of equivocation and deduction, that in a breath he could demonstrate as evil that which he had just logically proved to be good. "Never have I heard a more able and elaborate discourse against atheism than the one which you have just pronounced, M. l'abbé," exclaimed Henry III. one day in a transport of admiration. "Your majesty confers too much honour," replied du Perron; "nevertheless with your permission, sire, I will now prove to you by arguments as cogent that there is no God!"[1] To the honour of Henry III., the flippant rejoinder of du Perron so highly incensed his majesty, that he dismissed him from his office of court preacher.

M. de Rosny also paid assiduous court to madame de Liancour. The pernicious example set by the king soon bore its evil fruit. The profligacy of the past reign was displayed in still more hideous features; for the queen-mother Catherine de Medici insisted on a strict regard, at least, to outward decorum amongst the ladies of the court. Queen Marguerite laughed deri-

[1] Journal de Henri IV—Etoile. Vie du cardinal du Perron. 'Du Perron n'est pas docte, mais il plait au dames," says Joseph Scaliger, "Du Perron faisoit de grands discours aux dames de la cour, de la flux et du reflux de la mer, de l'être métaphysique et du principe de l'inviduation; mais il ne parlait jamais tant que quand il se mettoit sur la matière de je ne sais quel concile; il ne finissoit pas."—Lettres de Guy Patin, t. i. Lettre 115.

sively when she perused the documents distributed over the realm reflecting on her own deviations; and asked whether the fêtes of the court at Mantes were in reality more immaculate than the much-decried orgies of the castle of Usson? Two tragical incidents which occurred about this period created great public scandal and even made temporary impression on the versatile mind of the king. This catastrophe was the assassination of the countess de Chaulne and the marquise d'Humières by their respective husbands. Madame d'Humières first roused the jealousy of her husband by the levity of her deportment with the duke de Bellegarde; and a *liaison*, as it is supposed, with M. de Simiers had again inspired the fiercest resentment in the mind of the marquis, who was one of the bravest warriors in the royal service. One day, M. d'Humières and his wife were walking alone on the banks of a lake in the park attached to their castle in Picardy, when madame d'Humières was suddenly seized by her husband and precipitated into the water. The death of madame d'Humières was attributed to accident; her husband, however, did not long survive his victim, being killed by an arquebuse ball at the siege of Ham.

[1] In 1595: at his demise, the marquis d'Humières was almost the most wealthy noble of France.

Madame de Chaulne[1] was murdered with still more remorseless cruelty. She was strangled with her own hair by her husband and a party of masked assassins, who entered the chamber of the unfortunate countess in the dead of the night. These tragedies created a great sensation, but were speedily forgotten. The high rank of the parties placed them, for the moment, beyond *la justice du roi;* or a convenient advance to the ever-exhausted exchequer, rendered M. d'O and his colleagues disposed to connive at the escape of such profitable delinquents.

At the commencement of February, 1591, the king joined the camp of Nevers in the neighbourhood of Provins, and from thence marched to besiege Chartres. Before his departure from Chauny, Henry wrote to his faithful ally queen Elizabeth, to apprize her majesty of the invasion of Bretagne by the Spanish force under don Juan d'Aquila; and to ask for a succour of 2,000 English troops. The king also wrote to his ambassador in England, M. de Beauvoir la Nocle, in which despatch he minutely detailed the position of military affairs; and desired him

[1] Charles d'Ongnies, count de Chaulne, seigneur de la Hargerie, was the son of Louis d'Ongnies, count de Chaulne, and of Antoinette de Rasse, dame de la Hargerie. The unfortunate lady, wife of Charles, count de Chaulne, was Anne Juvenal des Ursins, daughter of François baron de Trainel, and Anne l'Orfèvre.

to use every persuasion to induce the English council to hazard some decisive indication of good will. Elizabeth, as is evidenced by her letters, took intense interest in the contest; and rarely was there a military movement of importance achieved but the queen wrote a voluminous epistle to her royal ally on the incident, tendering her opinion and advice. After the action at l'Arbre de Guise, Elizabeth sent Henry a scarf embroidered by her own hand. "*Monsieur, mon bon frère,*" wrote the queen, "its value is naught in comparison to the dignity of the personage for whom it is destined; but I supplicate you to hide its defects under the wings of your good charity, and to accept my little present in remembrance of me."[1] Elizabeth was rendering the king eminent service in aiding him to raise an auxiliary army in Germany, especially in the Saxon provinces. With her own hand the queen wrote letters to most of the German princes, exhorting them to aid the Protestant cause in France in which they themselves were so interested, before the compulsory conversion of king Henry, or the victories of Spain might retard, or perhaps totally ruin the progress of reform throughout the continent. The answer of the elector of Saxony being propitious, Henry

[1] Lettres missives de Henri IV—Edited by M. Berger de Xivrey, p. 285, t. ii.

accredited the viscount de Turenne as his ambassador to superintend the levy of the mercenaries. Turenne first repaired to London to compliment queen Elizabeth; and to request that an English agent might accompany him to the electoral court to demonstrate her Britannic majesty's interest in the negotiation, Henry, moreover, wished to borrow 30,000 gold crowns from the states of the Low Countries, a loan which his majesty requested the queen to recommend to her Flemish allies. Elizabeth was pleased to condescend to these requests; and moreover to promise a speedy succour of English troops and ammunition of war to aid in dislodging the Spaniards from Bretagne. Turenne visited the elector of Saxony at Dresden; he also repaired to the courts of Berlin, Heidelbourg, and Hesse Cassel. During the arduous negotiation which ensued, where the passions and partialities of individuals so various had to be propitiated, Turenne demonstrated the utmost tact and decision. He skilfully parried the reproaches of the princes relative to the disasters of war which befel the Germans of Sancy's levies after the demise of Henry III. He soothed the mortified vanity of Schomberg,[1] the famous

[1] Jean Wolf de Schomberg, seigneur de Pulnitz, eldest son of Wolfang de Schomberg, seigneur de Schonau, and Anne de Munknitz. His brother Gaspard was naturalized in France, and

leader of mercenary troops, who retired into Germany after the catastrophe of St. Cloud on some imaginary pique relative to precedency, a misunderstanding fostered by the duke d'Epernon; and he successfully combated the opposition of the emperor Rodolph, who attempted to interpose the imperial authority to annul a league so threatening to the power of his uncle, the king of Spain.

Philip II. and his ministers, Eraso and Idiaquez were active in their enmity; and intense at this period was the contentment of the cabinet of Madrid at the success of its policy. In Rome, king Philip beheld a pope of his own creation—ardent for his cause—and waiting only his royal bidding to issue anathema against the heretic who opposed the claims of the most serene infanta. Along the banks of the Somme, just without the Gallic territory, lay a Spanish army under Farnese, watching the progress of events, and ready again to pour down upon Picardy. In Paris, dissension prospered; and the most sanguinary demagogues supported the cause and invoked the protection of his Catholic majesty. In the army of Mayenne, disaffection paralysed the operation of its chieftains: the double dealing of Mendoza worked; and the Holy League which

had purchased in 1574 the county of Nanteuil from the duke de Guise.

refused to crown madame Isabel, and to be guided by Spanish diplomacy, was verging to its ruin. Even in the councils of Henri Quatre, the venom of Spanish guile circulated; and Philip was now exultingly fostering the development of a third party, which had for its avowed object the elevation to the throne of a Bourbon prince of the lineage of Condé. The designs of the king of Spain apparently triumphed; but an antidote fortunately was found in the complex nature of these intrigues. The fine drawn policy which aimed at subjugating and deceiving all, eventually retained the fealty of no one. The insincerity of his Catholic majesty once detected, his intended dupes acted thenceforth more or less openly, each for his own interest. Henry IV., the legitimate monarch, with his political tact and genial manner, then inserted the wedge of royal bounties and conciliation. Henry was in France, the holder of the richest provinces of the realm: the bribes of the Spanish monarch were prospective. Even Philip's faithful partisans, the demagogues of the Seize, bitterly realized this mortifying fact.

Meanwhile, king Henry passed a joyous interval before Chartres. Madame de Liancour and her aunt madame de Sourdis[1] were in the camp,

[1] Isabelle Babou de la Bourdaisière. The scandalous life of madame de Sourdis rivalled that of queen Marguerite.

and the smiles of *la belle Gabrielle*, effaced from the king's mind all misgivings relative to the hostile confederation of the courts of Rome and Spain. The siege was remarkable for many gallant feats of valour, in which Châtillon especially distinguished himself. The besieged defended their town with gallant courage, fighting under the banner of their miraculous image of the Holy Virgin of Chartres.[1] Cheverny, Henry's astute chancellor, furnished his royal master with the greater portion of the funds requisite for the siege. The lands appertaining to Cheverny, which included a considerable part of Chartres itself, were in the hands of the League; and the chancellor spared no effort for the rescue of his patrimony. The satisfaction of the king was, nevertheless, diminished by the absence of Rosny, owing to a slight coldness which had arisen between them. Of all Henry's old servants Rosny seems to have been most slighted and aspersed by the French courtiers. The jealous umbrage and cabals of M. d'O and of the duke de Nevers, perpetually involved Rosny in unpleasant dissensions. The cynical coldness of

[1] "Il a y dans l'église de Chartres, une ancienne statue, qu'on prétend être celle que les Druides avoient consacrée à une vierge, avec cette inscription: Virgo paritura." The people of Chartres revered this sacred image under the title of 'La Vierge qui devoit enfanter.' The image is still over the portal of the cathedral at Chartres.

the latter, his able financial capacity, and above all, his devoted loyalty to his royal master which rendered him eager to denounce private peculations, procured him countless enemies in a court so venal. The small town of Gisors had been recaptured by Rosny: he asked for its government. Henry gladly at first acceded to the petition; but eventually overcome by the insinuations and bad temper of d'O, his majesty ungenerously rescinded his promise. Rosny, thereupon, excused himself from following Henry to Chartres, and asked permission to visit the dower-lands appertaining to his wife near to Combrailles. The absence of so faithful and zealous a servant was felt by his majesty, who missed the enlightenment of Rosny's truthful, though dry comments on passing events. Henry accordingly wrote the following note to Rosny, which he sent by M. de Béthune, who had visited the camp on some affair relative to the town of Mantes.

THE KING TO M. DE ROSNY.

"Rosny:—All the advices which reach me from Mantes state that you look harassed and thin from overwork. If you feel inclined to enjoy yourself and to grow fat, I counsel you to come to me, after the return of your brother, who will tell you the particulars of our siege. From before Chartres, this 15th day of February.

"HENRY."[1]

[1] Bibl. Imp. F. de Béthune, MS. 8948, fol. 2

This overture vanquished Rosny's resentment; and he responded to Henry's invitation by repairing to the camp, much to the disgust of M. d'O. At the siege, Rosny's military ardour was so conspicuous, that the king desired him to fetch his troop of horse which was stationed at Mantes as a reinforcement. The mandate was joyfully obeyed; but during Rosny's progress between Mantes and Chartres, he was attacked by an ambuscade of the enemy, and severely wounded. This wound compelled M. de Rosny to keep his chamber for six weeks, when Chartres had fallen before the arms of his "*brave et digne roi.*"[1]

A few weeks previously, while still encamped before Chartres, Henry engaged in a hot correspondence with his sister, madame Catherine, relative to her *liaison* with the count de Soissons. Madame contumaciously refused to sacrifice her inclinations, having, as she said, "first attained to like the count at her brother's express desire, now, that he had fallen from the royal favour and become an object of suspicion, she would not abandon him." It was in vain that the king remonstrated with Madame; and pointed out the disloyal designs of Soissons, while he extolled the prince de Dombes, whose valiant feats in Bretagne, and whose character and immense riches

[1] Mém. du duc de Sully, t. i. edit. de 1822 à Paris.

rendered him a suitable *parti* for the sister of a king. "Montpensier," said his majesty, "has seven hundred noble gentlemen, his retainers—Soissons, at the very most has only twelve!" The count de Soissons, when prohibited by the king from aspiring longer to the alliance of Madame, sarcastically replied, "that to obey his majesty would be an insult to the royal dignity, he having once received permission to sue for the favour of that peerless princess, madame Catherine." The irony of this reply greatly nettled the king; the more so, as it was rumoured that a written promise of marriage had been interchanged between the princess and her lover. Madame Catherine, when questioned by her brother did not deny the implication; and seems altogether, acting on the advice of madame de Guiche, to have displayed much contumacy in refusing to make explanation or concession. Henry, who still maintained a frequent correspondence with madame de Guiche, thereupon sent a personage of the name of La Varanne, on a confidential mission to the countess, to intimate his designs as to the disposal of his sister's hand, and asking her co-operation. Madame de Guiche, however, was so violently incensed at the royal proceedings relative to Gabrielle d'Estrées, that she not only refused her aid in persuading the princess to accept the proposals of the

prince de Dombes ; but expressed most unsparing censure on his majesty's conduct. The choice of the royal messenger, moreover, piqued Madame and her *grande maîtresse.* La Varanne had filled the office of head-cook in the household of the princess ; and on the accession of king Henry, he followed his majesty to the camp in the same capacity. One of Henry's foibles, was his habit of familiar jocularity with his domestics and other subordinate persons. Accordingly, La Varanne had been employed by the king in carrying to Cœuvres the billets[1] which Henry addressed to Gabrielle d'Estrées : and as the agent proved acute and zealous, he soon obtained promotion in the royal household. On the return of La Varanne, his report of the mutinous deportment of madame de Guiche,[2] greatly irritated the king, who accordingly wrote the following severe letter to the countess :—

THE KING TO MADAME LA COMTESSE DE GRAMMONT.

" Madame :—I directed Lareine (La Varanne) to talk with you on the matters which, to my very great regret, have been

[1] Madame wittily observed, in allusion to the primary occupation of La Varanne as head-cook in Henry's Béarnnois household, " Ah ! La Varanne tu as plus gagné à porter les poulets du roi, mon frère, qu'à piquer les miens !" Généalogies de Ste. Marthe, t. ii. liv. 21.

[2] " On disoit de tout côtés que le mariage allait se faire à l'insu du roi, et même malgré lui." De Thou. Favyn.

recently mooted between my sister and myself. Far, however, from finding you willing and desirous to believe and aid my statements, I understand that your discourse tended utterly to blame me, and to incite and support my sister in a course highly improper and injurious. I could not have believed this of you! and therefore have only, madame, to address to you one word of counsel, which is, that I will never pardon any person who tries to foment quarrels between my sister and myself. Upon this fact I have the honour, madame, to kiss your hands.

"HENRY."[1]

This letter, with others addressed by the king to Madame, added to the formal interdiction which Henry forwarded to M. de Soissons, to presume further in the matter of his alliance with the princess, caused a temporary retardment of the measures contemplated by the pair. The count de Soissons, moreover, was intent at this period on the realization of those treasonable designs which, had they been successful, would ultimately have rendered his dictation paramount throughout the realm. The cardinal de Bourbon, since Henry's accession, had nominally filled the office of president of the council; but his adherence to the royal cause was alone prompted by self-interest; and that aspiring spirit which induced the cardinal to accept office under a *régime* he disapproved, rather than vegetate in obscurity within his archiepiscopal see. During

[1] Lettres Missives de Henri IV—Berger de Xivrey, vol. ii. Collection Alphabétique de l'Itographie par M.M. de Châteaugiron, Bérard, et Trémisol. Mém. de Sully, liv. 5ème.

the life of Sixtus V., the moderation of the supreme pontiff, and the determination which he evinced to uphold the succession in France in the person of Henri Quatre, compelled the junior princes of Bourbon to dissimulate their ambitious pretensions. The elevation of Gregory XIV. to the tiara changed the political bias of Rome. Spanish influence became dominant. Pisani, the French ambassador, quitted Rome, driven from the papal city by the slights which he experienced; while the duke de Luxembourg failed to command the pontifical ear. The policy about to be adopted by the Holy See was at once apparent by the appointment of Marcellino Landriano[1] as legate extraordinary, in the room of Séga, cardinal-bishop of Placentia. Landriano was invested with plenary powers. He was commissioned by his holiness to summon the clergy of the Gallican realm to espouse the policy of the League; and to combine for the elevation of the serene doña Isabel to the throne of St. Louis, under penalty of excommunication and deprivation. A brief was also sent by the pope, exhorting the nobles to abandon the heretic camp, and "not to do evil that a fancied good might ensue, by the preservation of the so-called legitimate succession." The pope, moreover,

[1] Marcellino Landriano, cardinal-legate, grand referendary of Rome.

wrote to the ex-council of the Seize, lauding its zeal, capacity, and fervour for the faith. "Dearly beloved," wrote the holy father to the turbulent demagogues of Paris, "ye who have made so glorious a beginning, take heed lest ye faint ere ye have accomplished the holy work for which ye are chosen and elect. Our Lord saith, 'not those who commence well, but they alone who persevere to the end, shall be saved.' It is, therefore, not enough that ye have hitherto demonstrated sublime resolution and courage; add now thereto the virtue of heroic constancy!" The pope proceeds to inform the people of Paris that he was about to despatch to their aid his nephew, "the son of that very noble personage don Ercole Sfrondrata, to aid in the righteous cause and to exterminate schism." [1]

At this perilous juncture, when envoys from the League were received in Rome, and the royal ambassadors excluded, the cardinal de Bourbon chose to open negotiations with the Holy See. He wrote an elaborate missive to the pope, protesting his fidelity to the faith; and excusing himself for having joined a heretic prince, and for participation in heretic counsels. "All this, holy father, I have done out of pure zeal for the faith, encouraged therein by the solemn promise

[1] Cayet—Chron. Nov. année 1590. De Thou. Lettres Monitoriales de Grégoire XIV. contre Henri IV.

of an apostate prince to abjure his errors." The cardinal proceeds to remind his holiness that he was next in the order of succession to "him who daily by his procrastination renders himself unfit to claim the crown, and who abuses the patience and long suffering accorded to his heresy!" The alleged claims of his two brothers, Conti and Soissons, are next canvassed by his eminence. The prince de Conti, he stated, was "so infirm and impaired in faculties as to render his accession to the throne impossible." The count de Soissons "is restless, unsettled, and being the youngest of the house of Condé, has neither followers nor esteem. Condé himself is an infant in arms; whose mother is under the imputation of adultery and of having poisoned her deceased lord, the late monseigneur de Condé. If, therefore, your holiness attaches weight to my argument, I give you the word of a prince and a prelate, that all the true Catholics of the realm will desert the king of Navarre at our bidding; and all the towns will hoist the banner of Bourbon."[1] The cardinal de Bourbon consulted on the composition of this precious epistle his ex-tutor Touchard, abbot of Bellinzona and

[1] Hist de son Temps, De Thou, liv. 101. Aubéry—Hist. des Cardinaux.—The Huguenots gave the cardinal the title of Tête de Marotte. "Marotte, était une tête de marionette qu'on mettait au haut d'un sceptre de fou."

du Perron, the young abbé of the wanton muse, and confessor to Gabrielle d'Estrées. To render his perfidy the more refined, the cardinal despatched Touchard to the camp before Chartres, to ask the royal permission for his eminence to send an envoy to Rome with letters of congratulation for the new pope. Henry unsuspectingly agreed; and one Scipion Balbani, a wily Italian, believed to be well initiated in subtle statecraft, was selected for the mission. On the arrival of Balbani in Rome he presented his letters at a private audience; he also laid before his holiness a pamphlet, favourable to the claims put forth by Bourbon, which Balbani falsely assured the pope was extensively circulated throughout the realm. It was afterwards ascertained that the pamphlet in question had been written by persons of the cardinal's household, and secretly printed in Angers. M. de Souvré was far too zealous for the royal cause to have suffered such a document to appear in Tours, without instituting an investigation very inconvenient to its authors. Meanwhile, the private secretary to Mayenne the abbé Desportes, who had accompanied the cardinal de Lorraine[1] to Rome, where he had been sent to hasten the succours promised by his holiness, so effectually cajoled Balbani, that he succeeded in drawing

[1] Louis de Lorraine, cardinal de Lorraine-Guise.

from him the secret of his mission; and in obtaining a copy of the cardinal's letter and other documents—all which he despatched by express to the duke de Mayenne. Gregory, meantime, signified to Balbani his answer to the overtures made by Bourbon. "Tell his eminence," said Gregory to the envoy, "that we accept his profession of submission. We can give no response to his petition. Religion must be our first care; we will then decide as equity may dictate. Say to the cardinal, that we exhort him forthwith to join the ranks of the Holy Union, and so set example to other Catholic peers in the army of Le Navarrois." The secret of this overture, by some unexplained revelation, became known to the cardinal de Lenoncourt; who, jealous of his colleague Bourbon, and indignant at the supercilious bearing adopted by his eminence, wrote his majesty a full detail of the intrigue. The indignation of the king was intense; he prudently, however, forbore to demonstrate his sense of his kinsman's perfidy, until after the fall of Chartres. Directions, however, were issued to the lieutenants over the various provinces to seize the pamphlet circulated by the cardinal's partisans and to prosecute the printer.

Henry now applied his vigorous energy to achieve the reduction of Chartres. He felt that his authority had suffered eclipse by the audaci-

ous enterprises of the Bourbon princes—the one to divest him of his royal crown; the other to obtain the hand of Madame, and so acquire a reversionary right over Béarn and probably on the realm itself, as the husband of his only sister and heiress. The steadfast loyalty of the brave marquis de Souvré,[1] governor of Tours, who at this period resisted tempting bribes from Mayenne and his faction, brought some comfort to the king. He received cheering news also from queen Elizabeth, to whom, while before Chartres, his majesty addressed a cordial letter. Turenne also wrote of the enthusiasm demonstrated for the royal cause in Germany; and of his speedy arrival in France at the head of a formidable force under the prince of Anhalt. In the papal city, however, a policy the most abasing to the realm of France and vindictive towards Henry personally was being adopted. On the 12th of May, pope Gregory declared his nephew, Her-

[1] Henry addressed the following letter to Souvré at this period. "La Gode m'amy; depuis cinq ou six jours que j'ai été ici je n'ay esté sans peine. J'espère avoir parachevé dans trois ou quatre jours, et puis aussitôt partir pour m'en aller en mon armée, ou je ne seray guères que vous n'oyés parler de moi; et que je ne tourmente fort mes ennemis. On m'a dit que vous ne m'aimes point; et le sieur d'Emery présent porteur m'a confirmé cela. S'il est ainsy je vous désavoue; et la première fois que je vous verray, je vous couperay la gorge! A. Dieu, la Gode m'amy! De Mantes ce 8ème Juillet, Henry."—Collec. MS. de M. le comte de Lasteyrie.

cules Sfondrata, duc de Monte-Marciano, and general of the Holy See and its dependencies. This Hercules Sfondrata was the youngest of the two nephews of the pope, the eldest of whom, the day following his inauguration, he invested with a cardinal's hat. Soon after the commencement of Gregory's pontificate, the great brigand chieftain Alfonso Picolomini, expiated his crimes at Florence by the hand of the headsman. The duchy of Monte-Marciano, part of the spoils of the criminal, was claimed by his holiness as a fief of the church, and bestowed as a suitable dotation on Hercules Sfondrata, who had previously borne the title of conde de Riviera. The ceremony of the investiture of the new duke de Monte-Marciano, as general of the Holy See, was performed in the basilica of Sta. Maria Maggiore with extraordinary pomp. The standards of the papal army were blessed by his holiness, who delivered them to the general. The first banner was emblazoned with the pontifical arms and the legend, "*Dextera Domini fecit virtutem: dextera Domini exaltavit me.*" The second banner bore a crucifix with the figures of the apostles Peter and Paul, and the motto, "*Hæc est victoria quæ vincit mundum—Fides nostra.*" The troops were reviewed by Gregory at Lodi. They consisted of a body of 6,000 Swiss, 2,000 Italian troops, and a squadron of horse 1,500 strong. Amongst

the officers were some of the representatives of the noblest houses of Italy. Orsini, Visconti, Pallavicino, Borghese, Pignatelli, Gaëtano, Naldi, and others—all eagerly solicited commands in the army about to march for the triumph of the orthodox Parisians. Gregory enthusiastically unsealed the treasures accumulated by his predecessor Sixtus, in the holy cause; much to the secret gratulation of Philip II., who looked always with suspicion on the well-filled money chests of the Vatican. In fact, to cause a desirable expansion of papal liberality, his Catholic majesty artfully instructed his ambassador the duke de Sessa, to demand licence from his holiness to alienate certain ecclesiastical lands situated in the kingdoms of Spain and Naples, for the liquidation of the costs of the sacred war. The demand was laid before Consistory; when it was prudently determined—rather than connive at ecclesiastical alienations the extent of which, if once sanctioned, could not be estimated—to gratify the king of Spain with a loan on the papal treasury. So that the six millions amassed by Sixtus dissolved—the possession of which put it in the pope's power to menace any day the tenure of Naples by the Spanish crown—Philip cared not as to the method devised. Throughout Rome the pulpits echoed with indignant comments on the profligate life led by the heretic

usurper; and contrasted Henry's career with that of the ascetic Philip II. Gabrielle d'Estrées was affectionately admonished from the pulpits of Rome to return to the paths of virtue, and to expiate her crime in one of the convents of the holy city. The queen, Marguerite de Valois, was adjured to disown the regal claims of the prince, whose contumacious heresy had prepared the catastrophes of Blois and St. Cloud. The pen of the widow of Charles IX. was even enlisted in the cause. The virtues of Elizabeth of Austria were still remembered; she, moreover, was deemed to possess some influence with Marguerite, having recently ceded part of her dowry lands to the queen, whose pecuniary necessity corresponded with her excesses.[1] In short, every expedient was resorted to, to kindle the besetting passions and the warlike humour of the French.

Henry suffered himself not to be intimidated. The siege was pushed with such vigour, that the inhabitants of Chartres signed a composition by which they promised to surrender unless relieved before the 19th day of April. Mayenne made an advance as if he intended to attack the royal entrenchments; but the consciousness of his weakness in the battle-field rendered him unwilling to hazard an engagement. Instead, therefore, of

[1] Bazin.—Notice sur Marguerite de Valois.

advancing to the rescue of the beleaguered city, the duke invested Château-Thierry, so that in the event of the fall of Chartres, the river Marne might still be navigable for the transport of provision to the capital. The governor of Château-Thierry was M. de Comblisy, son of the ex-secretary-of-state, Claude Pinart. The latter, fearing to be totally impoverished by a lengthened siege of Château-Thierry—as Pinart was the most wealthy proprietor of the district—made agreement with Mayenne for the surrender of the city, on condition that his son received an indemnity for the loss of his command. Mayenne accepted the condition, and encamped before the town. An assault was given to save the honour of Comblisy, who had secretly sanctioned his father's treason; but, according to compact, he capitulated at the first summons. The parliament of Chalons instantly cited Pinart and his son to answer for their treasonable composition with the enemy; and in default of their appearance at the bar of the chambers, condemned them to lose their heads and confiscated their lands, which a royal decree annexed to the domain of the crown. The government of Château-Thierry was given by Mayenne to M. de Lenoncourt; after the duke had requested Comblisy to resign his command—a demand the more bitter, as it plainly evidenced the

universal distrust inspired by his treacherous surrender.

Chartres, meanwhile, opened its gates to the king. Henry made his solemn entry into the city, attended by Cheverny, who was reinstalled in his government. A garrison of 1500 men under the baron de Biron, next occupied the town. The king imposed a pecuniary fine on the inhabitants; and compelled them to furnish a large contribution of wheat and other grain for the army. M. de Sourdis, was nominated as resident lieutenant-governor of Chartres, an appointment made at the request of madame de Liancour, and gladly sanctioned by Cheverny in his capacity of governor, to please madame de Sourdis; whose *liaison* with the chancellor was exciting even more scandalous comment, than that subsisting between his majesty and *la belle Gabrielle*. Other and minor triumphs signalized at this period the royal arms. "My cousin the duke d'Epernon, on his route to join the duke de Longueville, captured the governor of Montreuil, his son, and his lieutenant. Moreover, a few days subsequently, my garrison of Dieppe repulsed the duke d'Aumale at the head of 150 men. M. de Guitry has well beaten my enemies in a fight within the territory of Savoy; while my cousin the prince de Dombes, vanquished a body of 200 horse and 500 infantry appertain-

ing to M. de Mercœur—all which events demonstrate the favour which the Almighty vouchsafes to my loyal servants," wrote king Henry to the duke de Nevers,[1] on the day upon which he made his entry into Chartres. Before the month of June, 1591, Henry was also master of the town of Corbie. A design to surprise Mantes by the League, also failed, owing to the vigilance of M. de Béthune, governor of the town. In Normandy, the duke de Montpensier was doing valiant service to the royal cause, in the neighbourhood of Argentan. In Bretagne, the science and conduct of the gallant prince de Dombes, sufficed to check the enterprises of the Spanish invaders. On the 6th of June, Louviers was stormed, and taken in the presence of his majesty. This capture was one of the most important of the campaign; the vicinity of the town to Rouen, the chief stronghold of the League, rendered its possession serviceable for the accumulation of the stores and ammunition necessary for the great enterprise upon the former town, meditated by the king. The bishop of Evreux Claude de Saintes,[2] one of the most fanatic leaders of the Seize was taken prisoner in Louviers. The crimes and malevo-

[1] Bibl. Imp. F. de Béthune, 9104, fol. 57, MS.

[2] "Un des plus dangereux brouillons du royaume, un agent indéfatigable de révolte et un docteur de régicide."

lence of this turbulent churchman were so notorious, that the king immediately nominated a commission to assemble at Caen to try the prelate. The bishop did not, however, survive his capture many days; his transports of rage brought on apoplexy, which terminated his factious career. Henry wrote to queen Elizabeth to advertise her majesty of his triumph before Louviers; and to inform her of the safe landing of some English troops under Sir Roger Williams at Dieppe. The king also addressed the following playful epistle to M. de Larchant, his veteran captain of the guard, whose estates in the vicinity of Louviers, had been appropriated by the League:—

THE KING TO MONSIEUR DE LARCHANT.

"Monsieur de Larchant:—This note is to apprize you of the unfortunate news that we have taken Louviers, for which I wager, however, you will shed no tear. Your brother is with me here, and he says that now you both possess something; that henceforth you will enjoy the substance which those said rascals had deprived you of so long! I request that you will journey hither with my cousin the cardinal de Bourbon. The fall of Louviers is a miracle; to God alone do we owe this success.

"Our other capture was likewise well done; my envoy will recount to you every incident you may wish to learn. I would fain kiss the hands of madame de Larchant,[1] but I fear you

[1] Diane de Vivonne de la Chastaigneraye, consort of Nicholas de Grimonville, seigneur de Larchant, d'Auteuil, and de la Bolaye, who died 1592.

might be jealous! I am told that she weeps whenever she hears of my successes. Send me word whether these said tears are tears of joy, or tears of sorrow! Bonjour! From Vernon, this 8th day of June.

"HENRY."[1]

The Bull of pope Gregory, excommunicating the adherents and upholders of Le Navarrois, was meantime published at Rheims on the 10th of June; in which city all the members of the house of Lorraine met to confer, and, if possible, to arrange their mutual differences. The parliaments of Tours and Chalons boldly issued counter-decrees protesting against the monitory, as illegal, arbitrary, and unauthorized, and condemning the said document to be burned by the hands of the public executioner. Inasmuch as the nuncio Landriano had entered France without his majesty's sanction, the decree directed the attorney-general to institute a prosecution against this prelate; and authorized the seizure of his property, and the arrest of his person. Henry immediately countersigned this decree; and published a declaration on the condition of affairs, in which he, as usual, postponed the consideration of religious matters until a more auspicious period. This decisive act, created dismay in the councils of the League.

[1] Lettres Missives de Henri IV., t. ii. Bibl. Imp. F. Leydet, liasse vii. MS.

The fall of Chartres, Corbie, Louviers, and Genlis—the English auxiliary force already approaching the shores of France under the earl of Essex; and the vast army of *reiters* levied by Turenne, with the aid of the gold and patronage of queen Elizabeth, caused many of the warmest adherents of the League to tremble for the stability of the confederation. The growth of the Tiers-Parti, which involved disaffection in the royal house itself, was the only hopeful sign to be descried. Nevertheless, the well-known characters of the cardinal and his brother Soissons, caused little reliance to be reposed in their ability or perseverence. As for the prince de Conti, he steadily declined to share in negotiations not sanctioned by the king.

The dukes de Lorraine, Mayenne, Nemours, and Mercœur, and the duke de Bar[1] took part in the conferences at Rheims; there were also present the new nuncio Landriano, the ambassador don Bernardino Mendoza, the cardinal Pellevé,[2] and other hot adherents of the League. The debates were long and complicated; but as each leading member cherished some *point de réserve*,

[1] Eldest son of the duke de Lorraine; he also bore the title of marquis de Pont-à-Mousson.

[2] Nicholas de Pelvé or Pellevé, bishop of Amiens, 1553, archbishop of Sens in 1563, cardinal in 1572, cardinal-archbishop of Rheims in 1592. This prelate died in 1594, literally of rage at the capitulation of Paris to Henry IV.

upon which he tried to mislead his colleagues, no honest resolution was adopted. Mayenne still hoped to supplant both Henri Quatre and the Infanta; Nemours to procure the alliance of doña Isabel for himself or for the young duke de Guise. The duke de Lorraine sought to obtain the recognition of his right to the crown of France by the states-general. Mercœur, to detach Bretagne from France; Mendoza to intrigue for the policy of Philip II.—to toy with the formidable Seize, and to deceive Mayenne. Deputies from the Paris Leaguers again presented articles demanding the suppression of titles of honour, the equality of every rank, and the proclamation of a republic! The legate regaled the assembly with sonorous orations, proving that the fate of France depended on the Holy See; and that the chieftains would meet with success in degree as they deferred to the maternal guidance of the church. The upshot of the conference was a unanimous resolution, "that the Spanish ambassador should be requested to confer with his Catholic majesty on the affairs of the League; and to represent the extent of the foreign succours about to invade the realm in support of Le Béarnois." Mendoza was also empowered to promise, that the states should be convoked without further delay whenever a victory over the enemy had re-established the

prestige of the League. The duke de Mayenne, moreover, privately despatched the president Jeannin to Madrid to confer with Philip II., and if possible to penetrate the true designs of his Catholic majesty, and the amount of his *bien-veillance* towards M. de Mayenne personally.[1] The duke also sent an agent to Farnese duke of Parma, to remind him of his promised co-operation during the autumn; and to request a loan. An envoy, moreover, proceeded to Rome privately to petition his holiness on behalf of M. de Mayenne, that the papal army under the duke de Monte-Marciano might be encamped in Lorraine, so as to arrest the army of reiters under Turenne and Anhalt on the German frontiers. The wily duke likewise sent for M. de Villeroy, and after many professions of personal esteem for Henri Quatre, he requested the former to wait upon his majesty at Mantes, and to exhort the king to abjure his errors as he had engaged to do on his proclamation in the camp of St. Cloud. Villeroy was to assure the king that the duke de Mayenne was anxious for peace; but would only sign a pacification which should exhibit the glorious spectacle of an orthodox and

[1] The historian Mathieu gives a detailed relation of this mission of the president Jeannin, to which he attaches great importance. Liv. i. p. 69, et seq.

united France. Finally, Villeroy was to represent that M. de Mayenne neither abetted nor approved of the late treasonable and scandalous overtures made by monseigneur de Bourbon to the papal court.

CHAPTER II.

1591—1592.

Council extraordinary at Mantes.—Arrival of the cardinal de Bourbon.—Scene in the council chamber.—Influence of madame de Liancour.—Jealousy of the king.—The duke de Bellegarde.—Escape of the duke de Guise from Tours.—Details.—Death of La Noue.—Charmante Gabrielle.—Sojourn of the king at Cassine-le-Duc, and at Sedan.—The duchesse de Bouillon.—King reviews the German army.—Entry into France of the duke de Monte-Marciano and the papal legion.—Nuptials of the viscount de Turenne.—Capture of Stenay.—Mission of the president Jeannin to Madrid.—His interview with Philip II.—Correspondence of the Seize with king Philip.—Attitude of the Paris Leaguers.—Their fury and cabals.—Affair of M. Brigart.—They resolve on the assassination of the first president de Brisson and two counsellors of the High Court.—Details of the conspiracy.—Panic in Paris.—Envoys are despatched to supplicate for the return of Mayenne.—Audience of the Seize with mesdames de Montpensier and de Nemours.—Don Diego de Evora intercedes for the assassins of Brisson.—Return of Mayenne to Paris.—His firmness.—Execution of the assassins.—Laws promulgated to preserve the peace of the capital.—The duke makes overtures through Villeroy to the king.—He departs from Paris.—Death of Gregory XIV.—Election of his successor.

KING HENRY, after the reduction of Louviers, repaired to the town of Mantes, where he con-

voked a council extraordinary to consider the condition and to examine the petition of the Prostestant communities of the realm. Part of the privy council under the presidency of the cardinals de Bourbon and de Lenoncourt had remained at Tours; the other half, with the chancellor Cheverny and M. d'O, held its session in Mantes. His majesty had now come to the wise resolve to unite the council; and on account of the intrigues of the Bourbon princes to transfer it to Chartres. Meantime, the king sent a mandate to the cardinal de Bourbon, commanding him to repair to Mantes. Aware that his negotiation with the Holy See was known to his majesty, the cardinal reluctantly obeyed. Henry seems to have felt little apprehension as to the result of designs, which in competent hands might have perilled his crown. His ministers, however—especially Cheverny, and La Noue—took occasion to recommend his majesty to conform without delay to the faith of the majority of his subjects. "Your majesty cannot arrest M. le Cardinal: in the present condition of affairs it would be like cutting off one of your own arms; yet, if you tacitly connive at such doings, it will give your foes conveniency to perfect their plots. By your majesty's conversion you may shun two otherwise evitable dangers." The words of La Noue

made the deepest impression on the mind of the king; for Henry distrusted the temporizing and elastic policy of his magnificent chancellor. "Your majesty knows," said La Noue, "that from the beginning I have been of opinion, that unless you turn Catholic according to the Roman view, you will never become *de facto* king of France. 'Tis a lamentable strait—that of apostacy or deposition; your majesty may, however, be assured that such is the alternative before you." Henry had already made concession to the opinion of his most trusted counsellors; and a daily mass was celebrated in the palace, which was attended by Madame de Liancour, who affected great devotion. The choir of the royal chapel was reconstituted, and other innovations sanctioned. Madame heard of these concessions with indignation; and she wrote bitter reproaches to her brother for his compliance with the solicitations of evil counsellors; and for the scandal resulting from the presence of Gabrielle d'Estrées at the royal residence. Madame also vowed that she would never approach the court; or submit to the degradation of an ignoble competition with madame de Liancour.

The cardinal de Bourbon, attended by the abbé de Bellinzona,[1] and by du Perron, arrived

[1] Touchard abbé de Bellosane ex-preceptor of the cardinal de Bourbon, and subsequently his secretary.

at Mantes about the 1st of July. The count de Soissons remained at Tours, from whence he repaired to his château de Maillé. His resentment towards the king at this period was so excessive, that but for his hope of finally obtaining the hand of Madame, he probably would have joined Mayenne. This displeasure was not a little augmented, when by a privy council mandate he was deprived of his command in Poitou, and his brother the prince de Conti, substituted as governor over that important district.[1] The king received M. de Bourbon with great outward *bienveillance;* and rode out three miles to meet his eminence and escort him into Mantes. All members of the council suspected of favouring the views of the junior princes of Bourbon, were likewise courteously received. Henry had made his resolves; for the measures which he intended to propose at the meeting of the council, would, he believed, compel the open declaration of their disaffection; or by the tacit assent of these personages to edicts likely to prove obnoxious to their party, so impair their influence, as altogether to neutralize any private projects of ambition. The king had well weighed his position—he was ready, it was true, to renounce his so-called errors; but he resolved to render such abjura-

[1] Davila—liv. 12.

tion effectual by a judicious selection of period and opportunity. A present recantation, the king believed would not be followed by favourable reaction—nor might it induce the submission of Mayenne and other potent chieftains of the League, yet intent on personal interests; and still the faithful liegemen of the Spanish court. Moreover, the royal power was not potent enough to dictate the conditions of this recantation; while the taunts of the legate, and the reserve of the prelates assembled at Mantes, indicated that the restoration of Madame de Liancour to her husband, might be insisted upon as the preliminary of absolution. The favour of queen Elizabeth and of the German princes would also be forfeited; likewise it was probable that the great army already approaching the frontiers under Turénne and Anhalt, might disband in fervent indignation at this second apostacy. "What should I then be?" asked Henry of Cheverny. "A crownless monarch, an apostate, abandoned alike by catholic and Huguenot —the one deeming me a hypocrite, the other a traitor!" The shrewd wisdom of Henry IV. often enabled him thus to analyze the hasty and immature counsel of his adherents.

On the 5th day of July, the important council assembled.[1] There were present the cardi-

[1] MS. Cotton, Calig E. VIII. fol. 52.

nals de Bourbon and Lenoncourt, Cheverny, Biron, d'O, Souvré, Estrées, Nevers, and the bishops of Mantes, Maillezais, Bayeux, Chartres the archbishop of Bourges, and other eminent personages. The recent papal Bull was the subject first brought under discussion. The intrusion into the kingdom of the nuncio Landriano was unanimously condemned as against the fundamental laws of the Gallican church, and the concordat of Francis I.—the latter being still the ecclesiastical code of the realm. All thus far were harmoniously agreed; the Declaration of the privy-counsellors was therefore signed, and put aside for presentation to the parliaments of Chalons and Tours. Cheverny then rose, and laid a petition from the protestant communities of the realm before his majesty. The document prayed for the revocation of all hostile edicts issued by the late king before and after the states of Blois, 1589. It supplicated the king to issue a proclamation, confirming the Huguenot population in the full exercise of its civil rights and religious liberties; and to confirm the edicts of pacification granted at the intercession of her majesty the late queen-mother, at the signature of the treaty of Beaulieu. Henry then addressed the assemblage at great length. His majesty said that the woes and oppression of the Huguenots had long

pressed sorely on his heart; and he had resolved that the first true exercise of his kingly prerogatives should give them relief. The edicts complained of were oppressive, cruel, and unjust; that they altered the order of succession; "so that all of you, messieurs, are amenable to severe penalties for your loyal adherence to your legitimate monarch. We annul these said edicts, therefore, which declare our succession invalid, and our faith accursed!" Henry proceeded to demonstrate, "that policy required these concessions to be at once offered; inasmuch as two great Huguenot armies, under the respective command of the earl of Essex and the prince of Anhalt, were about to enter France, and would not fail to procure ameliorations for their co-religionists; and perhaps might extort articles, even more ample and momentous than those which he proposed to confer." On a sign from the king, Cheverny read the opening paragraph of the proposed decree, which commenced with the usual formula that, "the king, by the advice of the high and mighty lords princes of the blood-royal our dearly beloved cousins, the—" when the chancellor was arrested in the enumeration of their styles and titles, by the cardinal de Bourbon. His eminence for some time had shewn evident signs of discomfiture; and with a pallid face, he now rose and said, "Sire, this

decree of toleration is against my conscience, and in defiance of what you have solemnly promised. We cannot assent." "We shall be happy to learn, monseigneur, in what your conscience is offended? If your deceased father[1] could hear you speak as you have just done, he would strangle you with his own hands!" hotly retorted king Henry. "God, sire, in his mercy, has, you perceive, exempted me from such outrage," replied the cardinal feebly. "In granting this decree I perform my duty," said his majesty. "Monseigneur, your priestly avocations withdraw you from the dreadful spectacle of bloodshed; I desire to mitigate this evil. I will, moreover repress your own private enterprises of which I am cognizant, as well as those of your allies and confederates! You side with the League: if you intend to persist in so contumacious a course, I command you to quit this council-chamber, with all those whom you and yours delude!" The cardinal stammered forth a few incoherent words; and rising, he glanced at his colleagues the chief partisans of the Tiers-Parti present at the session—the archbishop of Bourges, and the bishops of Nantes and Bayeux. These prelates, however, studiously averted their eyes; and occupied themselves in perusing divers

[1] Louis I., prince de Condé, killed on the field of Jarnac, while fighting for the Protestant cause.

papers scattered over the council board. M. de Bourbon, therefore, was sharply commanded by his majesty to resume his seat; and the Declaration granting the boon of religious toleration to the Protestants of the realm, received the royal signature.[1] Henry then delivered the document to Jacques Auguste de Thou, and directed him to carry the edict for registration to the parliament at Tours. The king also authorized De Thou, whose probity was revered, to ask a loan 30,000 gold crowns, from the loyal municipalities of the midland provinces—a commission so successfully achieved, that the money was delivered to the king before the arrival of the German army. Henry next announced his resolve to secure equal rights to all denominations within his dominions. He stated "that being a Huguenot, he intended to enjoy the public exercise of his faith, until"—continued his majesty, by way of tempering the previous vivacity of his expressions, "until the submission of all parties in the realm to our lawful authority, shall permit us to attend to the matter of religious controversy." A few other edicts of minor consequence were then debated and agreed upon; after which the council separated.

The cardinal was greatly intimidated by the

[1] MS. Cotton, Calig. E. VIII. fol. 52.

menacing deportment of the king. His eminence would have retired to Tours; but was desired by Henry to preside over a synod convoked at Mantes to consider the matter of papal jurisdiction; and especially to pronounce on the validity of the sentences of excommunication recently launched by pope Gregory on the princely allies, and loyal nobles of king Henry. The cardinal made many demurs, and demonstrated much disaffection, but the firmly expressed will of the king prevailed: and the name of the cardinal is attached to the letters-circular despatched throughout the realm by the prelates present in synod, protesting against the usurpations of Rome; and declaring the papal monitory null and void as regarded France.

Meantime, the secret of the plot originated by the cardinal de Bourbon was extorted from M. du Perron,[1] by the blandishments of Gabrielle d'Estrées. Du Perron despairing of fortune under so feeble and dissolute a patron as the cardinal de Bourbon, allowed himself to be dazzled by a prospect of immediate promotion. Already du

[1] Jacques Davy du Perron, was born at Berne. Perron was at first a disciple of Calvin; on his conversion, he was presented to Henry III. by his poet Desportes, who was struck with du Perron's power as a linguist. The king appointed du Perron to the office of reader, with a salary of 1200 crowns.

Perron's learning and witticisms had caused his society to be highly valued by the king; who applauded his liberal sentiments. The see of Evreux was the bribe offered for du Perron's revelations. He also received the post of court chaplain in ordinary; an office which constantly attached him to the royal household. The influence of madame de Liancour was now felt in most matters, so firmly had she established her power over the king. From the day that Gabrielle d'Estrées accepted the fate forced upon her, her aim seems to have been sooner or later to share Henry's throne. She daily received with the ceremony and dignity of a queen: in public the king stood hat in hand while in her presence. Henry occasionally indulged in gusts of jealousy whenever the duke de Bellegarde appeared, entranced as of yore, in the fair presence of the favourite. A story was circulated that Gabrielle admitted Bellegarde to private audience during any temporary absence of his majesty. One day, it was said that, Henry returning unexpectedly, the duke was compelled to hide himself in a small *garde-robe* opening from the apartment of madame de Liancour. The king purposely asked to taste some rare sweetmeats, which he knew were kept in this closet. Finding the door locked, his majesty's suspicion was confirmed, and he in-

sisted on entering the chamber. Bellegarde, therefore, had no resource but to throw himself from the window; beneath which, fortunately for the duke, was a flower-bed, the mould of which had recently been turned.[1] Whether there was foundation for this story, or the king resented its propagation, certain it is, that about this period his majesty amicably dismissed the duke de Bellegarde from court, prohibiting him from returning thither until after his own marriage.[2] Amongst madame de Liancour's intimate associates were Rosny and his brother, the chancellor de Cheverny, d'O, and M. de Balagny, who eventually espoused Diane, her eldest sister; a lady whose repute was notorious almost as that of the abbess of Maubuisson. All the illustrious ladies of the court of Henry III. still paid their homage by letter only to the sovereign. The prudery attributed to Madame, rendered her service as little desirable to these stately dames, as they deemed it to tolerate the equivocal position of Gabrielle d'Estrées, or the undisguised levity of queen Marguerite.

An event, meantime, happened which at first

[1] Histoire des Amours de Henri IV. par Louise Marguerite de Lorraine. Elzevir, Leyden, 1667.

[2] The king did not however strictly enforce this mandate. The duke de Bellegarde espoused in 1595, Anne de Beuil, daughter of Honoré sieur de Fontaine, and Anne, daughter of Louis de Beuil, count de Sancerre.

produced unmitigated consternation. The young duke de Guise, who from the period of his arrest after the massacre of Blois, had been incarcerated in the citadel of Tours, made his escape thence. The duke's jailer was M. de Rouvray, a staunch royalist—the government of the town was in the hands of the marquis de Souvré:[1] no event therefore, was more unexpected. The captivity of the prince, who had just completed his twenty-fifth year, had been one of unexampled rigour. His guards consisted of twenty-five archers and twelve Swiss soldiers: six of these persons alternately watched the prisoner night and day, and followed him wherever he stirred. "At night, this illustrious young prince was deprived of his servants, who were locked up by the guards in a separate chamber, while his own apartment—the door of which was barred and chained—was lighted by numerous flambeaux, and his slumbers watched by six of the said archers, who each in turn, during the space of one hour, remained at the foot of the couch contemplating their captive."[2] This severe *espionnage*

[1] The marquis de Souvré was honoured by the most affectionate regard of Henri IV. Numberless short letters are extant addressed by the king to this valiant and truly excellent nobleman, who was an honour to the age and the reign in which he lived.

[2] Discours véritable de la délivrance miraculeuse de M. de Guise—Archives Curieuses, t. xiii.

had been adopted at the command of the late king after the assault of the faubourgs of Tours by Mayenne. Apparently no opportunity could occur for the evasion of a prisoner so guarded—one, moreover, whom the duke de Mayenne had even more interest in keeping captive than the king himself. Madame de Montpensier, however, vowed to effect her nephew's rescue; for she had no longer faith in Mayenne's diplomacy, or in his military fortune. Latterly the political influence of the duchess had declined. Mayenne resented her Spanish inclinations, which tended to the elevation of the infanta to the throne; and consequently to that of the duke de Guise as the partner of the royal state of doña Isabel. Whilst Guise remained captive, the supremacy of M. de Mayenne as chief of Lorraine-Guise was indisputable. In the event, however, of the liberation of that prince, "the son of the first martyr of the realm," the idol of the Seize, and the son-in-law whom Philip II. indicated as likely to be most acceptable to him, —a formidable competition must arise. The duke de Guise had been permitted some correspondence and interchange of gifts with queen Louise and her ladies, who inhabited the neighbouring castle of Chenonceau. The queen entertained an ardent desire for the escape of the prince; whom she regarded as the innocent victim

of her late husband's crime, and whose liberation the Church would deem an expiation. This matter seems to have been the only subject upon which the queen dowager, after the death of her husband, held correspondence with madame de Montpensier. The design was certainly matured by these royal ladies, and adopted with cleverness and fortitude by Guise. The latter found means, through queen Louise, to communicate with La Châstre,[1] his father's old and attached servant, then in the service of the League, and stationed at Orleans. The duke prayed La Châstre to send his son M. de Maison-Fort with a detachment to wait at the end of the faubourg de la Riche at mid-day, on the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin, as it was his design to put into execution a scheme for his escape. La Châstre entered with alacrity into the plot: but prudently proposed to send six trusty friends only to receive the duke at a ford across the river Cher, a quarter of a league below Tours; while a party of sixty horse should be stationed in the adjacent village of Selles to form an escort powerful enough to conduct him to a place of safety. The duke, meanwhile, accustomed his guards to join him in the pastime of hide and seek; and took opportunity to hide

[1] Claude de la Châstre, bailli de Berri, maréchal de France, in 1594, deceased in 1614.

so cleverly as occasionally to baffle for a brief interval their search. On the evening of the 18th of August, a cord was concealed in a basket of clean linen sent from the duke's laundress; who was bribed by a lady[1] in the suite of queen Louise to venture the perilous service. This cord was secreted by the duke's valet, who was to share his master's perils. After matins on the eventful morning, M. de Guise proposed to his guards a trial of speed up to the clock-tower of the castle. This pastime was declined. The duke then himself suddenly started off at great speed to an upper gallery, upon the corridor of which his sleeping apartment opened. A thick door studded with bars and bolts closed the entrance to this gallery. The duke slammed to the door and barred it, just as his guards, breathless from the exertion of their rapid ascent, appeared. For a few minutes the men waited patiently, thinking that their prisoner was as usual hiding, and that the door would be soon reopened by his valet. They next began, with loud expostulations, to rap violently at the door. Finding that no response was given to their summons, the archers rushed to the watch-towers and raised an alarm. Guise, meantime,

[1] Probably by Madame de Schomberg, mistress of the robes to queen Louise, who was intimately connected with the house of Guise. This lady's maiden name was Jeanne Chateigner, daughter of Henri Clutin, seigneur d'Oisel et de Villeparisis.

with the greatest resolution and promptitude, aided by two valets, who chanced to be in his bed-chamber, attached the cord to the bar of the window, and tying a pole to the end of the rope, commenced, *à califourchon*, a perilous descent. The window overlooked the river, at a height of 100 feet. Fortunately the Loire happened to be low, the bed of the river being in some places visible. The prince had been lowered about 80 feet, when the archers from an adjacent tower discharged their arquebuses at their prisoner, and raised loud outcries. The noise so affrighted the duke's servants, who deemed their master assassinated, that they let go the rope. Guise, who had escaped the arquebuse balls, was therefore precipitated to the ground from a height of about 20 feet. He lay for a few seconds stunned at the foot of the tower; but rising, ran towards the spot where the agents sent by M. de la Châstre waited.[1] Fortunately for the duke at mid-day the gates of the town were closed; and as he had foreseen, his guards were compelled to obtain the keys of the city-

[1] "Le 15me de le mois d'Aoust jour de l'Assomption de Nôtre Dame, est advenu en cette ville de Tours le plus admirable trait d'histoire que l'on ait jamais vu ni lu. M. de Guise s'est sauvé! Je ne puis vous dire quelle sera la fortune de ce jeune prince; mais remettant devant mes yeux la sagesse, la magnanimité et l'heur qui se sont trouvés en cette acte, je ne puis rien promettre de petit de lui, à l'advenir!"—Pasquier liv. 14, lettre xi.

gates before they could join in pursuit, unless they also made the same perilous descent. On the river bank, Guise met a man, who was leading a horse to water. The astonishment of this individual was intense, seeing a young man running wildly without his hat along the dry bed of the river, amid a great firing and uproar from the citadel. The duke taking advantage of his consternation, sprang upon the horse and galloped at full speed towards the ford at St. Avertin. The town by that time was in a state of fierce commotion, and the soldiers of the garrison and many townspeople followed in pursuit. The duke, finding that his guards were gaining upon him, plunged into the river and arrived in safety at the opposite bank. The persons who were waiting at the ford, seeing a cavalier approach followed in the distance by a number of people, took to flight, believing that the plot was discovered, and a *sortie* made for their own arrest. The shouts and gestures of the duke finally attracting their attention, one of the party rode back and demanded, "*Qui vive ?*" The duke who was nearly exhausted by fatigue and excitement, responded, "*Vive Guise !*" The cavaliers then gathered round the duke in transports of joy: they mounted him on a fleet horse sent by M. de la Châstre for his use, and immediately took the road to Selles where they safely

arrived.[1] A messenger was despatched to Bourges, to apprize La Châstre of the fortunate evasion achieved by M. de Guise. La Châstre first commanded a Te Deum to be chanted in the cathedral; and then set out to conduct the duke to Bourges, at the head of an escort of 600 men.

The news of the escape of Guise was brought to king Henry while he was besieging Noyon. "The more enemies I have," valiantly exclaimed the king, "greater honour will their defeat confer!" The political consequences of the event, nevertheless, seriously alarmed the king; but after reflexion, Henry exclaimed, "We have heard evil tidings, for we have no longer a chief hostage for the lives of any of our faithful servants who may fall into the fangs of M. de Mayenne: but attend to my words, the flight of M. de Guise is the ruin of the League!" Henry alluded to the dissension and bitter rivalry likely to ensue between the uncle and the nephew; the policy of Mayenne being self-interested, while that of Guise would inevitably follow in the wake of Philip II. The throne of the *fleurs de lis*, and the hand of the comely infanta were vistas too brilliant not to dazzle the imagination of a gallant young prince. At the

[1] Discours véritable de la délivrance miraculeuse de monseigneur le duc de Guise—Archives Curieuses, t. xiii. 1er série. De Thou, liv. 101. Cayet, Chron. Nov. Le Grain—Décade de Henri IV. Péréfixe Hist. de Henri IV. Journal de Henri IV. MMS. Bibl. Imp, Béth. et Dupuys.

same time that the king received intelligence of the duke's evasion, a messenger arrived in camp bearing the afflicting tidings of the death of M. de La Noue at the siege of Lamballe. The head of this brave officer was struck by a splinter of rock shivered during a cannonade.[1] Henry shed tears on learning the death of his old and attached servant, one of the most renowned warriors of the age. La Noue, like other of Henry's ancient adherents, had, nevertheless, suffered much since his majesty's accession, from apparent slights and disregard of past service. The king, to propitiate his new subjects, and to acquire that popularity, which in truth was ever more regarded by him than private friendship, had affected an impartiality and distance which keenly wounded the brave veterans, who through all the phases of his changeful fortunes adhered to Le Navarrois with chivalrous fidelity. Henry, however, expressed in vivid words his grief in a despatch to the duke de Montmorency from his camp at Noyon. "Mingled with my content at the result of my expedition," writes his majesty, "are bitter ingredients. I have just received advices of the flight of the duke de Guise from Tours. I believe his escape is to be attributed to the negligence of his guards, rather than to

[1] Amyraut—Vie de François de la Noue dit Bras de Fer.—Elzevir, Leyde, 1661. Mém. de la Noue et discours politique et militaire.—Basle, 1599. MS. Bibl. Imp. Suppl. fr. 1009.

disloyalty. I should bear this bad news more patiently, but for worse tidings which accompanied it; namely, the death of M. de la Noue from a wound. I had sent the latter to help my cousin le prince de Dombes in Bretagne. I am penetrated with extreme affliction. God, however, has lately accustomed me to receive both good and evil. I praise His Holy Name, and pray that He may endow me with patience."[1] Yet while Henry expressed himself so pathetically, Châtillon the brave and loyal, the eldest son of the admiral de Coligny, had retired to his government sick at heart at the ingratitude demonstrated by the king for countless services; and indignant that his just claims were postponed to further those of some new adherent. It must be allowed, nevertheless, that Henry's position was embarrassing, hampered by the conflicting claims of his old and new adherents, persons for the most part whose interests were as diverse as their religious principles.

In Rome, the escape of Guise was celebrated as a public triumph. Services of thanksgiving were performed in all churches throughout the papal dominions. The most wily diplomatists of the Sacred College, however, discerned the impending danger. "*Quella uscita del signor duca di Ghisa fuori di prigione era la ruina della Lega,*" exclaimed Gaëtano. Madame de Nemours and her

[1] MS. Bibl. Imp. Suppl. fr. 1009-10.

daughter, madame de Montpensier, received with infinite complacency and dignity the compliments of the Spanish ambassadors, Evora and Mendoza on the occasion. The enthusiasm of mademoiselle de Guise also had abated for the king since the rise of madame Gabrielle; though she often expressed curiosity to see the latter, and personally to judge of the beauty so highly lauded.

The successful issue of the siege of Noyon, which was carried by assault on the 17th of August, in the presence of the king, greatly elated the royal partisans.[1] The duke de Mayenne advanced to Ham, and joined the duke d'Aumale in military operations, in the hope of drawing off the royal troops. The duke's forces consisted of 10,000 infantry and 2000 horse. Henry showed great readiness to offer battle; but Mayenne who had always been worsted in encounters with his majesty, withdrew to the opposite bank of the Somme, and contented himself with menacing demonstrations. Noyon had been ostensibly attacked by the king, because the predatory *sorties* of its garrison, incommoded the royal towns of St. Quentin, Corbie, and Compiègne. It was believed, however that the wishes of the marquis de Cœuvres were chiefly consulted. The town of Noyon was wealthy and considerable; and M. d'Estrées desired the government of the district, which at the solici-

[1] Discours au vray de la prise de Noyon.—Mém de la Ligue, t. iv.

tation of his daughter was conferred upon him. Madame de Liancour remained at Mantes during the military operations in Picardy, under the guardianship of Rosny. The self-command of the king was severely tried at this parting; and so visible were Henry's regrets, that numerous sonnets and elegies were composed on the occasion—many redolent rather with wit than with veneration. The following lines appeared, probably from the facile pen of the bishop of Evreux,[1] which, with the music they were set to, obtained unbounded popularity; and are treasured even to the present day as a memorial of Henri le Grand:—

LES ADIEUX DU ROI A MADAME GABRIELLE.

Charmante Gabrielle!
Percé de mille dards,
Quand la gloire m'appelle
Sous les drapeaux de Mars.
Cruelle departye
Malheureux jour!
Que ne suis-je sans vie
Ou sans amour!

L'amour sans nulle peine
M'a par vos doux regards
Comme un grand capitaine
Mis sous ses étendards.
Cruelle departye, etc.

[1] The lines have also been attributed to Bertaut, bishop of Séez; the music was composed by Ducauroy composer to Charles IX for a Christmas Carol. The king sent the lines to madame de Liancour; "Ces vers," wrote his majesty, "vous représenteront mieux ma condition; et plus agréablement que ne feroit la prose."—Bibl. Imp. MS. F. Dupuy, fol. 42. Serieys.—Lettres inédites de Henri IV.

Partagés ma couronne
Le prix de ma valeur
Je la tiens de Bellone,
Tenés-la de mon cœur.
Cruelle departye
Malheureux jour!
Que ne suis-je sans vie
Ou sans amour!

Rosny, by command of his royal master, treated madame de Liancour with the deference which the princess Catherine might have exacted. The letters addressed to Gabrielle were sent by the king to Rosny; who after the arrival of every express, waited with great formality upon her to present them. Often the king sent messages besides, which Rosny was to impart.[1]

During his sojourn in the neighbourhood of Noyon the king received the earl of Essex, who attended by a suite of sixty gentlemen, presented himself to kiss his majesty's hand; and to offer the noble succour of 4,000 English troops and 500 horse on behalf of her Britannic majesty. The arrival of Essex, then in the zenith of his favour with Elizabeth, was regarded both by friends and foes as a notable and most significant mark of the queen's sympathy; and of her de-

[1] One of the king's letters is as follows: "A M. de Rosny. J'ai dit à ce porteur le tant que nous pourrons fournir d'hommes. Si l'occasion de la bataille ce présente, je n'oublieray à vous advertir. J'escris à ma maîtresse: faites m'en tenir la response, et l'assurer toujours de ma résolution de l'adorer. Bonsoir!" Bibl. Imp. F. Béth. MS. 9129, fol. 3.

termination to uphold the king under every possible combination. Henry was besieging Pierrefons when the approach of the earl was announced. The count de Chaulne received the ambassador at Compiègne on the 29th of August. The splendour of the earl's retinue excited admiration. He was preceded by six pages dressed in liveries of orange velvet, by six trumpeters, and by six footmen. The attire of the earl, and the accoutrements of his horse were valued at the sum of 60,000 crowns. The king received Elizabeth's favoured courtier with marks of lavish honour, and conducted him to Noyon, where for three days he was magnificently entertained. "Madame," wrote the king to Elizabeth, "I could not receive a more signal and striking testimony of the favour with which you regard me, than by the arrival here of *mon cousin* the earl of Essex. You have therein, madame, surpassed my most daring aspirations, though I should not have presumed to ask from you the visit of so illustrious a personage—one who so entirely possesses your favour and approval."[1] Essex, on finding that Henry had no present purpose of carrying hostilities into Normandy or Bretagne—his majesty waiting for the advent of the German army—took leave and returned to England. The English auxiliaries under the command of Sir Roger Williams were

[1] Life of Egerton p. 415, et seq.

therefore sent into Champagne, to the indignation of queen Elizabeth, who desired forthwith to dislodge the Spaniards from Bretagne; or at least that an attack might be organized for the capture of Rouen.

On the 15th of September, king Henry departed from Chauny to receive the great German army. His majesty was escorted by a troop of 800 horse. He passed through the towns of Crescy, Poliot, La Capelle, and Maubert-Fontaine, and on the 21st of September arrived at Cassine-le-Duc, a stronghold and palace appertaining to the duke de Nevers. The duke, who was besieging the neighbouring castle of Aumont, received the king with magnificence. Nevers was accompanied by the dukes de Longueville and Montpensier, the count de St. Paul and MM. de Gramont, Biron, Larchant, d'Auchy, and other chief nobles. Within the castle the king was welcomed by the duchess de Nevers. The brilliant duchesse Henriette, the coquette of the reign of Henry III. and the friend of Marguerite de Valois, had now subsided into the grave and earnest politician, conversant with the vicissitudes of war. Henry thanked the duchesse for her recent help in the recapture of the town of La Varenne and the castle of La Ferté from the duke de Nemours. Madame de Nevers had promptly sent the guard left for her own protection to join the royal forces; and had caused several

cannons from the castle of Nevers to be forwarded to reinforce the king's troop of artillery. In the evening a splendid banquet was given by the duke and duchess in honour of their royal guest; at which every custom demanded by the elaborate etiquette of the late court was observed. On the 23rd of September, Henry made his entry into the town of Sedan, and was there joyfully received by the inhabitants and their young duchess, whose hand and immense heritage the king destined for his faithful servant M. de Turenne. The alliance of mademoiselle de Bouillon had been sought by the most illustrious princes of the age. The condition, according to her brother's will,[1] on which she succeeded to the princely heritage of La Marck was that she should espouse a Protestant. Amongst her suitors were the duke de Bar eldest son of the duke de Lorraine, the heir of Nevers M. de Rhetal, the duke de Nemours, and the first cousin of the young princess, the prince de Dombes. Turenne, however, the king selected from all his competitors. The viscount was brave, independent, a Protestant, and able, as he subsequently proved, to hold in check his restless neighbour the duke de Lorraine. The

[1] The duke de Bouillon died at Geneva after the defeat of the German army under Dhona at Vimory by the duke de Guise in 1587, leaving his sister heiress of his immense possessions. Anselme—Hist. des grands Officiers de la couronne de France—Du Bouchet—Généalogies des comtes de la Marck.

health of the duchess was delicate. She was slight in figure, pale, and nervous—apparently drooping under the responsibilities of her magnificent possessions; and scared by the warlike forays made on her lands and castles by eager competitors for her alliance. The young heiress had twice stood a siege from the duke de Lorraine in her castle of Sedan; and countless had been the overtures made by foreign princes to obtain the rich fiefs of Bouillon. The viscount de Turenne arrived at Sedan on his return from Germany on the day following his majesty's entry. Henry received Turenne in the tennis court of the castle. After the interchange of a few words of warm commendation, his majesty carried off the viscount to introduce him to his affianced bride. The nuptial festivities the king fixed for the 11th day of October, on his return from visiting his German camp. After receiving the submission of Mouzon and Attigny, two neighbouring towns, the king, with Turenne, quitted Sedan for the latter place, taking temporary leave of the duchess.

The German army, meanwhile, encamped in battle array on the plains of Vandy on Michaelmas Day, 1591. It consisted of 16,000 men, all picked soldiers, under able chieftains. In the staff of the prince of Anhalt were cadets of the chief Protestant houses of Germany; and the celebrated Rokendolf was camp-master. When

his majesty appeared, attended by a brilliant train, a salute was fired, and the prince of Anhalt was presented to Henry by Turenne. All the colonels of regiments were next in succession introduced and kissed the king's hand; afterwards Henry visited each battalion, being received with incredible enthusiasm by the soldiers. To each soldier or officer brought under his notice, Henry had some appropriate speech to make. His majesty's skill in German genealogy charmed the officers; while the men wondered at his knowledge of the various fiscal burdens of their fatherland. The review over, the king accepted a splendid collation in the tent of the general-in-chief; after which Henry returned to head-quarters at Grandpré.[1]

Almost simultaneously with the entrance into France of the German troops, the succours raised by pope Gregory for the service of the League arrived, though in a very broken condition. The cavalry amounted to 1,000 horse; but the foot regiments, decimated by rapine and by the plunder of the vineyards along their passage, entered Lorraine in miserable disarray. Dissension, moreover, had risen high amongst the chieftains. At Lons-le-Saunier an angry altercation ensued between the duke de Monte-Marciano and his lieutenant Piero Gaëtano nephew of the late cardinal-legate, which ended

[1] Journal de Henri IV. Cayet, De Thou, Dupleix, Mathieu.

by the departure of Gaëtano for Italy by the advice of Matteuci cardinal-archbishop of Ragusa.[1] Respect for the supreme pontiff, alone restrained the chivalrous nobility under the banner of Monte-Marciano; whose recent honours inspired ridicule rather than deference. The troops were received by Mayenne at Verdun. The duke was accompanied by the duke de Lorraine, and by Capizucchi, commandant of the Spanish regiments in the pay of the League. The advance of the king on the 1st of October at the head of 4,000 men, to reconnoitre the Italian camp, caused ludicrous consternation amongst the levies of his holiness. Henry offered battle to the chieftains; but with the utmost precipitation, after a slight skirmish, the duke de Monte-Marciano entrenched himself in the town of Verdun. The panic which he had inflicted appears greatly to have delighted the king, who wrote a graphic despatch describing the encounter to the duke de Nevers. "I keep carefully all the helmets of the slain to shew you," ironically wrote his majesty. On the 6th of October Henry paid a visit to Nevers, who was still besieging Aumont, a castle which though captured by the League, was the duke's private property. The king, with his own hand, pointed

[1] Who seems to have been sent as mediator general between the turbulent condottieri. Matteuci bore the title of commissary-general.

the cannon during an attack given in honour of the royal visit. Such was the precision of his majesty's aim, that the discharge shattered the principal portal of the castle, and killed the captain, his lieutenant, and ensign.

After this exploit, Henry returned to Sedan. The nuptials of Turenne with the duchesse de Bouillon, were solemnized on the 11th of October. The king promised the first vacant bâton of marshal to the gallant bridegroom, who was, moreover, endowed by his bride with full control over her heritage, together with the title of duke de Bouillon. On the afternoon of his bridal day, the new duke; to testify his gratitude to his royal master, gathered the retainers of Bouillon, and suddenly appeared before the adjacent town of Steney, which he assaulted and took by storm. Early the following morning, the duke presented himself at the king's *levée* and recounted his exploit. Struck with admiration, Henry cordially embraced Turenne. "*Ventre St. Gris!*" exclaimed his majesty, "I should soon be master of my kingdom, if all the newly-married men in the realm were to make me a similar wedding present!"[1] Henry the same day departed for Vervins there to take the last

[1] Marsolier—Vie du duc de Bouillon. Cayet. The young duchess did not long survive her marriage, but died of consumption, May 15, 1594.

measures necessary to insure the success of the siege of Rouen—an enterprise which his majesty at length resolved upon, partly out of deference for the counsels of queen Elizabeth.

The affairs of the League, since the capture of Louviers and Noyon, had fallen in a most unsatisfactory condition. The president Jeannin returned from Madrid about the end of August, and repaired to Rheims to render account of his mission to Mayenne. The duke's private remonstrances had made no deeper impression on the mind of king Philip, than did his petitions addressed through the ambassadors Mendoza and don Diego Evora. Philip and his council had resolved not to consume their forces and their treasures for the elevation of Mayenne. It was for the interest of their subtle plans that the civil war should be prolonged; so that both the hostile parties might exhaust themselves, hereafter to fall an easy prey to the designs and mediation of Spain. Philip, therefore, furnished funds which sufficed only to feed the flame of dissension. In reply to the entreaties of Jeannin, that he would be pleased to increase the monthly stipend of 19,000 crowns for the carrying on of the war—his Catholic majesty not only peremptorily refused, but added, that from henceforth this money, instead of being given to M. de Mayenne, would pass through the

hands of his ambassador. "We have seen small fruit for so many sums expended. Our supplies shall no longer be doled in secret, but every Frenchman shall know his obligation to our crown." The king added "that the aid of his armies should never be witholden to re-establish the Catholic faith; but that the duke of Parma could not, on the instant, leave the Low Countries on account of the capture of Zutphen by the Dutch. As for paying M. de Mayenne's French levies, the king declared himself willing to do so from the day that the states assembled for the election of a king; but until that preliminary was accomplished, he felt not disposed to make increased donations of men or money." Philip lauded the orthodox zeal of the council of the Seize; and concluded the audience with an aspiration that all Frenchmen might be inspired by similar views.[1] This speech gave the president to understand that Philip had no intention of furthering Mayenne's personal views on the crown. Jeannin at a second interview, therefore, dexterously hinted on what terms M. de Mayenne might be induced to bring about the election of madame Isabel, on condition of her immediate marriage with a French prince.

[1] Davila, lib. 12. Mathieu—Règne de Henri IV. liv. i. p. 69 et seq.

Amongst other demands, the duke had desired his agent to stipulate "that he should retain his present high command until after the coronation of the new sovereign; that the duchy of Burgundy should be ceded to him—or in lieu of that province, 100,000 crowns of annual revenue guaranteed to himself and to his posterity: that his monthly pension of 10,000 crowns should be augmented to 20,000: his debts and those of madame de Mayenne liquidated; and finally, that the king of Spain should entertain an army of 16,000 men and 3000 horse."[1] Philip listened complacently to these propositions; but too wary to compromise his sentiments, he dismissed the president Jeannin with the promise, "that when the states had been assembled, and his propositions approved by a majority of members, he would send an invincible Spanish army to eject the king of Navarre from the realm of France; and would continue to allow M. de Mayenne the sum of 10,000 crowns a month for his private expenditure."

This ignominious patronage incensed Mayenne; who beheld himself bound hand and foot and prevented from undertaking any great enterprise, except on condition of his active and public support of the alleged rights of doña

[1] Davila, lib. 12. De Thou. Aubigny—Hist. Universelle, t. iii. p. 445 et seq.

Isabel. The shameless excesses of the Seize in Paris, moreover, rendered it at this period doubtful whether those rebels would not succeed in altogether ejecting the representatives of the holy League from the capital. A deputation composed of Boucher, Masparault, Crucé, Lannoy, Sesnault, Ameline, Cromé and others, waited again upon the duke at Rhetal, and demanded the re-establishment of the council of Forty and the seals for Sesnault. They also severely censured Villeroy, Jeannin, the first president de Brisson, and the governor of Paris M. de Belin, all of whom they accused of being royalists and hostile to the ambassadors of the Catholic king. Mayenne, as usual, dismissed his brawling petitioners with undissembled contempt.[1] On the return of the deputation to Paris a secret meeting was convened, and an address to king Philip unanimously voted. "We thank your Catholic majesty for your most benign favour," wrote these demagogues. "We trust that the united arms of your majesty and of his holiness will deliver us from the oppressions of our arch-enemy; who for more than a year has blockaded our city in one mode or another. We can assure your Catholic majesty, that the aspiration of all true Catholics is to behold your majesty

[1] Journal de Henri IV. Maimbourg, Hist. de la Ligue. Cayet. Davila. De Thou.

in possession of this crown and sceptre. We, for our own part, joyfully yield ourselves to the paternal arms of so noble a monarch; nevertheless, we pray your majesty as such seems to be your pleasure, to select without delay a son-in-law whom we pledge ourselves to accept for our king. We trust that the benediction of the Almighty will rest on the alliance of the serene Infanta, as aforetime on the marriage of the very puissant and Christian princess madame Blanche de Castille, the mother of our mighty and religious king St. Louis. We will receive the daughter of your Catholic majesty as the representative of that august princess; for the virtues of the most serene doña Isabel already rivet universal admiration." The letter was signed by all the leaders of the Seize, and sent to Madrid by an ecclesiastic named Le Père Mathieu.[1] This overture was not made so secretly but that it came to the knowledge of Brisson, first president of the parliament, who notified the fact to the governor of Paris M. de Belin. Belin, in his turn, sent an express to the duke de Mayenne. The rage of the malcontents was excessive: they vowed to be avenged upon Brisson; and, as a preliminary, organized a clamorous faction of needy priests and adven-

[1] Cayet. Mém. de la Ligue—Maimbourg. De Thou, liv. 101. Mém. de Villeroy.

turers to create tumult in the streets of the capital. During this interval, the duke de Guise made his entry into Paris. The members of the Seize, imagining that they beheld the advent of Philip's well-beloved son-in-law, received the duke with noisy demonstrations and tedious harangues. Guise somewhat chilled the hot enthusiasm of these sycophants by his gloom and haughty reserve of manner. The pale face, the tall, slight figure, and sombre attire of the duke disappointed madame de Montpensier; who descried in her nephew's deportment little of that tact and suavity indispensable to a popular hero.

Meanwhile, a fresh incident happened which achieved the exasperation of the ex-council of Forty. One Brigart, a municipal officer, suspected by these men for his royalist tendencies, had an uncle an officer in the neighbouring garrison of St. Denis. Having some domestic matters to communicate to his relative, Brigart wrote a note, in which he imprudently entered into details respecting the condition of the people of Paris. The strictest scrutiny was instituted at the barriers as to the contents of letters and papers leaving the capital. Brigart, therefore, rolled his note in tow, and placed it as a stopper to a bottle, which his servant was desired to get filled with wine at a

shop in the faubourg. At the gate the man was examined, and the *ruse* being detected, the bottle was broken and the letter captured. Brigart was immediately arrested, and the Seize preferred a petition to the parliament for his trial on the charge of treasonable communication with Le Navarrois. The Chambers, however, rejected the petition, and dismissed the alleged culprit on the plea that the letter in itself could not be construed into a treasonable communication; and that evidence was wanting to prove that such had been the *animus* of the writer. Upon this decision, a private meeting took place in the house of one Boursier, ostensibly to protest against some fresh taxes about to be imposed upon the city. The most violent abuse of the authorities ensued; and the acquittal of Brigart was dilated upon with rancour. The conduct and designs of the president Brisson, and of two counsellors of the High Court, MM. Archer and Tardif, were canvassed, and the determination was expressed to put down Mayenne and his party; the first step to effect which, would be the infliction of summary vengeance on the president. The duke de Mayenne was alluded to under the soubriquet of *Le Colosse*, from his enormous *embonpoint*; while the marquis de Belin, governor of Paris, was nicknamed *Le Renard*. A few days

subsequently, the club met again. Pelletier, curé de St. Jacques, was present. Panting to accomplish the supremacy of the Spanish faction, this turbulent priest counselled violent measures, so that the council of the League, intimidated by these demonstrations, might again gladly resign power to the Forty. "Messieurs! we have long enough connived; it is vain to hope for justice or liberty from the court of parliament. We have endured long enough; now, let us have a game with knives!" A silence ensued, when a member named Gourlin, whispered something in the ear of the *curé*. Pelletier rose, his countenance livid with fury. Casting a sharp glance round on the assembly, he exclaimed, "I am informed that there are traitors amid this company. Drag them forth at once, I say, and pitch them into the river!" After this sally the members offered no comment; but quickly dispersed, more in dread of Pelletier's threats than apprehensive of spies.[1] Cromé, on the following day, caused the *procès-verbal* of the examination of Brigart to be printed, so that he might circulate copies amongst the citizens in order to inflame their ire against the judges; and especially against the first president who pronounced the acquittal. M. Molé, the attorney-

[1] Assemblée secrette de plusieurs bourgeois de la ville de Paris—Pièces Justificatives des Mém. du duc de Nevers.

general, thereupon, caused the seizure of all copies printed, and prohibited the issue. Cromé, however, audaciously led a guard of halberdiers from the city bands, and posting them round the printer's house, he compelled the latter again to strike off the required number of copies of the process. This violent proceeding being connived at by the authorities, inspired the conspirators with greater audacity. Sixty personages chosen from the tumultuous *melée*, which during the early part of Mayenne's dictatorship met at the Hôtel de Ville, held council on the 5th of November in the house of La Bruyère. It was then resolved to carry on steadily the designs of the sections; and in order to insure secrecy and unity, to elect by ballot a supreme council of Ten, which was to take the initiative and whose directions were to be holden as final. It was, moreover, agreed to renew the oath of the Union. The plot was confided to the Spanish ambassadors Mendoza and Evora. These ministers approved the purpose of the Seize; but declined to be openly concerned in the matter. The following day ten members were elected, to whose decision the affair of Brigart was referred. De Lannoy, Pelletier, Cromé, and one Martin were named as honorary members of the secret council—the treason of Brigart being well understood by these personages.

The death of the president Brisson, and of the two counsellors Tardif and Archer was next resolved upon. The Ten, nevertheless, though aided by the support of Bussy-le-Clerc and the chief leaders of the sections, dared not take so hazardous a step without the sanction of the majority of members. To explain their sanguinary intents would be to defeat the project; consequently, Bussy proposed an expedient which enabled his colleagues to execute their seditious designs. De Thou states that the Seize were exasperated against Brisson, rather for his betrayal of the letter they had written to the king of Spain, than for his share in the acquittal of Brigart. A secret meeting was again holden on the 12th, for the alleged purpose of receiving signatures to the renewed oath of allegiance to the Sacred Union, from the burgesses and tithingmen of the sections. Bussy addressed the meeting: producing four large sheets of paper, he presently said, "Messieurs; it would be too severe a tax upon the patience of this honourable assemblage to read the oath with its preamble, both being so familiar to you all. Do me the favour, therefore, to attach your names with your seals to this paper." Most persons unsuspectingly obeyed; divining little that they were then signing the doom of the first president of the parliament of Paris.

During the following days the same fraud was successfully practised; the people believing that they were alone subscribing the oath of the Union —a formula familiar to all. The sittings of the council of Ten were holden in the apartments of De Lannoy. The first design of the conspirators was to assassinate Brisson in his house; but finally it was resolved to give a judicial aspect to the murder in order to terrify opponents, and to render the much-coveted resumption of office by the ex-Forty appear as a consequent result. No fear of the duke de Mayenne seems to have shaken the resolve of the malcontents. The duke's *prestige* was gone. His indecision and obvious manœuvring for his own interests, led the factions to believe that their bold enterprise would remain unpunished, especially as it was approved by the Spanish envoys.

On the night of the 14th of November, the conspirators appeared in arms, all being prepared for the execution of the plot. They met before the house of Pelletier. At dawn, the latter accompanied by La Bruyère, Boursier, and others, proceeded to the quarters of the Spanish commandant, don Pedro Ligoretto, and left a memorial signed by Bussy, Louchard, Sainton, Lannoy, and Ameline, stating the reason why they had taken arms. Hamilton, curé of St. Cosmo, made a similar progress to the abodes of the

legate, and of the commander of the Italian regiments in garrison. No great demonstration was made; the few people abroad accustomed to witness the orators of the sections holding forth in the neighbourhood of the Sorbonne, passed on, ignorant that any special enterprise was meditated. Brisson usually quitted his house at dawn to transact legal business at the Palais. Bussy, Louchard, Le Normant, and Amroux, therefore, lay in wait on the pont St. Michel, which the president must needs traverse *en route* to the Chambers. Brisson saluted these demagogues and would have passed on. Amroux then advanced, and invited the president to accompany him to the Hôtel de Ville where his presence was expected; at the same time seizing his victim by the collar of his robe. Surrounded by his captors, Brisson was dragged, despite his protests, through Le Marché Neuf towards the prison of the Châtelet, which he was finally compelled to enter.

There every preparation for the cruel tragedy had been made by Crucé, who bought over the jailer Jacques Danton by a bribe, and the promise of promotion to the same office in the Conciergerie. A summons also had been despatched for the public executioner, Jean Roseau.

Brisson was conducted to the board-room of the prison. There he found one Cochery

installed as judge, while Cromé prepared to conduct the examination. In the room were Ameline—who was arrayed in a black rochet ornamented at the back by a red-cross—Le Normant, Amroux, Emonot, Crucé, Lannoy, and many others. Brisson was first asked, "Whether he had not lately corresponded with the king of Navarre?" The president shortly replied, "No." "Have you not given your silver plate to the said Navarrois?" Brisson replied significantly, "that his plate had been mysteriously stolen from his abode." "Why," asked Cromé, "did you not condemn to death that scoundrel and traitor Jean Brigart?" "I was not his judge," responded the first president calmly; "the said Brigart was absolved by the assembled Chambers." No further queries were put. After some conference, Ameline approached the president, and laying his hand on the shoulder of the latter, blasphemously said: "The Lord to-day has chosen to demand thy soul! As a great favour thou shalt not die in public, thou traitor and most execrable hypocrite!" Brisson was then dragged from the chamber without being permitted to utter a word, and incarcerated in a cell.

Meanwhile, M. Larcher had been arrested as he was entering the Palais by a party of malcontents armed with pistols. He entered, and was

placed before the tribunal of the Seize as Brisson quitted the chamber. Hamilton and another troop of confederates about the same time brought M. Tardif to the Châtelet, whose crime was that he had recently blamed the proceedings of the Seize in a public harangue; and had, on the commencement of the troubles, circulated a pamphlet against the pretentions of the League, written by the duke de Nevers.[1] While the examination of the counsellors was proceeding, Crucé sent for the executioner. "We of this tribunal, decree the death of the president Brisson. He is below. Fetch him hither, and hang him!" was the laconic command he issued. "I dare not obey your order," replied Roseau, "unless you produce a warrant signed by M. de Mayenne or his executive!" "*Par le mort Dieu!*" furiously rejoined Crucé, "obey, or I will hang you, even if needs be, with my own hands!" Roseau sullenly responded that he had no rope. Upon this, Crucé summoned one of his emissaries, and sent him to buy three cords. One of the prison officers next conducted the unfortunate president to the vault in which he was to die.

[1] Brisson fut convaincu d'être le chef des hérétiques et politiques de Paris; Larcher comme un fauteur des hérétiques, et Tardif comme ennemi de la sainte Ligue, et des princes catholiques qui la soutenoient.—Pasquier, Lettres, t. ii. p. 304.—Scaligeriana au mot Brisson. Confession Catholique du Sieur de Sancy.

Crucé then read aloud the sentence of the Seize, having first compelled Brisson to divest himself of his hat and robe, and to kneel. The president listened with composure until the document concluded. He then rose, and with eloquent fervour, protested against the cruel and lawless act. He petitioned for a trial; and appealed to the justice, the religion, and the humanity of his hearers. A loud laugh shook the assembly. "*Il faut mourir, Président, il faut mourir!*" reiterated Crucé. Without further parley, Brisson was then seized and bound by the executioner. A moment was given him to confess to one of the priestly demagogues present. A rope was then attached to a ladder lashed to a beam, and from this rude gallows the first magistrate of the realm was hanged.[1] This catastrophe accomplished, the fate of the two learned counsellors was soon brought to an issue. Larcher was first conducted to the fatal chamber. "*O mon Dieu! vous avez fait mourir ce grand homme!*" exclaimed he, when his eyes rested on the lifeless body of Brisson. The fright and emotion of the condemned man, whose health was weak, were so overpowering, that he fell fainting to the ground. Larcher was raised by the executioner,

[1] Cayet. De Thou. Montreuil—Discours sur la mort de monsieur le président Brisson. Ensemble les arrests donnés à l'encontre des assassinateurs.—A Paris, 1595, chez Jean Richet.

and forthwith suspended to the beam. M. Tardif next suffered; predicting the speedy overthrow of these tyrants of the capital.

Without, meanwhile, a great crowd had assembled armed with bludgeons and arquebuses, curiously surveying the prison, and impatient to learn the reason of the arrest of the magistrates and the fate which had befallen them. A guard was posted by Du Chesne, another malcontent, before the Châtelet, and no one was permitted to enter. The rumour of the crime committed, soon however spread. Instead of hailing the foul deed and cheering its perpetrators, the populace discussed the intelligence in dismay. Crucé waited but for one indication of public approval to throw open the portals of the Châtelet and exhibit his victims. The populace, however, silently dispersed at nightfall; while many respectable citizens fled to their houses and barricaded them against the expected onslaught. Patrols of troops perambulated the streets during the night, and the city bands surrounded the Hôtel de Ville; to which refuge many members of the Seize retreated. The council of Ten, meantime, aghast at the failure of the *coup d'état*, determined to make one more effort to rouse the passions of the multitude. During the night, Crucé caused the dead bodies of his victims to be hung on gibbets. At four o'clock,

two hundred zealots again assembled to escort the gibbets to the place de Grêve. Crucé and his colleagues were armed, and most of them marched holding a dark lantern. This device, however, seemed only to increase the affright and horror of the populace.[1] The streets and public squares were filled with spectators; but no insurrectionary movement was attempted. Brisson was popular, excepting with the faction guilty of his murder. His varied gifts were remembered with regret; his learning lauded; and his lamentable fate deplored.[2] The Seize, meantime, harangued, menaced, and caballed. At one time, the sections threatened to march on the Palais, and subject all its members to the same fate. Bussy-le-Clerc turned the guns of the Bastille on the city. The parliament of Paris, intimidated and terror-stricken by the hardy enterprise of the factious, sent courier after courier to the duke de Mayenne, who was at Laon, imploring him to enter the city and save them from destruction. "In twelve hours, the sections will have risen, and we shall be

[1] The body of the first president was subsequently bought by his widow Denise de Vigny; that of M. Tardif also by his widow Jeanne Dupont. Madame Citcer bought the body of her son-in-law M. l'Archer. Popular indignation was extreme at this indecent transaction.

[2] Pasquier, nevertheless, accuses Brisson of avarice and cruelty.

massacred." The parliament added, "that unless the duke could at once occupy Paris, the preservation of the city would compel the members to supplicate the protection of the *King*" —which was the first time that La Haute Chambre accorded that regal title to Henry IV. The marquis de Belin, the chief members of the municipality, and the duchesses, despatched envoys hourly to the same effect. "*Monseigneur, tirez nous du massacre !*" was the burden of all the missives. The Seize and their adherents, perceiving the turn affairs had taken, banded together to concert measures for their safety. Their council was holden in the house of Boucher curé de St. Benôit; who, having accidentally been absent from Paris during the organization of the conspiracy, assumed towards his late colleagues the most patronizing and benignant airs. Boucher conferred with the Spanish agents and with the legate, at the desire of the Seize. At their subsequent council, the following expedients were debated: to proclaim the downfall of M. de Mayenne and the temporary rule of the duke of Parma, and to proceed at once to the election of a king; to close the gates against the duke de Mayenne; and to send an assassin into his army to kill him by a blow from a poniard. When this proposition was discussed, one of the zealots rose

and cried "Confer upon me, messieurs, the honour of striking this first blessed blow. Do you doubt my zeal?" Another proposed to seize the duchesses de Nemours and de Montpensier, and hold them as hostages for the peaceable deportment of M. de Mayenne. This proposal met with applause; when a member remarked that madame de Nemours approved of the justice lately executed, and promised to support the sections. Nevertheless, the assembly, on rising, resolved to proceed in a body to the hôtel de Guise—first to ascertain the sentiments of the princesses; and then to demand audience of M. de Belin and of the archbishop of Lyons. A tumultuous array of democrats, therefore, headed by Cromé, during the afternoon of the 22nd of November invested the hôtel of madame de Nemours. The chiefs were admitted into the presence of the duchess and her daughter, who behaved with great courage. Madame de Montpensier made a flourishing harangue; and distinctly promised to maintain the cause of the Seize, and to uphold their late sanguinary act on the arrival of Monsieur her brother. The lamentation of madame de Mayenne was excessive, when Cromé boldly proposed that one of her sons should remain at the Hôtel de Ville as a guarantee of his father's pacific action. The duchess de Montpensier,

however, well versed in popular declamation, seemed so thoroughly to fraternize with the sentiments and deeds of the crew of demagogues before her, that Cromé and his troop withdrew, satisfied and enraptured with her assurances. M. de Belin expressed himself with extreme reserve; and left the right and justice of the summary execution done on M. de Brisson and his colleagues to the wisdom of M. de Mayenne.

The duke de Mayenne was at Laon when the intelligence reached him of the outrage committed by the Seize; and of the death of Brisson. The duke was deeply affected. He beheld himself surrounded on all sides with adversity and dilemma. His authority was outraged by the factions; his claims contested by his nephew Guise; and his just demands disregarded by his lukewarm ally, king Philip. Mayenne had discernment enough to perceive how greatly Spanish intrigue was promoted by the brawling agitators of the capital; and that the moment was present when the enormity of the crime committed by these persons, placed them at his mercy. The menace of the parliament of Paris to call in the aid of the king, was a sign of the temper of the chief amongst the Parisians, not to be neglected. Mayenne beheld the great League on the eve of extinction by its own internal dissensions and rivalries. His adherence

thereto had impoverished him; his lands were mortgaged; and his rich personalty pledged for the payment of debts contracted for the war. The heritage of madame de Mayenne in the south was desolated by the contending parties; her revenues were confiscated, and her castles ruined. Every interest, political as well as personal, urged the duke to vigorous measures to re-establish his authority; and to ward off the menaced reconciliation with the king, excepting on his own terms.

Accordingly, attended by Villeroy, the duke departed the same night for Paris, fully determined to make signal example of the rebels, The Spanish ambassador don Diego Evora was at the head quarters of the army at Montcornet, a place about a league from Laon. On hearing of the duke's precipitate departure, and of the catastrophes in Paris, Evora set out to overtake Mayenne; hoping by the adoption of that diplomacy, half menace, half persuasion, which had so often proved efficacious, to arrest measures of severity. He represented that when a government was disorganized and in a state of transition, that political crimes ought not to be punished with the rigour which they merited in times of peace; that the Seize were loyal Frenchmen and good citizens; that Brisson and his colleagues had given great provocation

to the sections; that doubtless a plot existed to deliver up the city to the prince of Béarn: and finally that Mayenne could not punish the crime without exciting a sedition.

The duke listened with his usual stolid *sang-froid.* Villeroy and M. de Vitry, aide-de-camp to the duke, combated resolutely the logic of the wily Spaniard. "These said miscreants wish to abolish all rule; have they not proposed the abolition of royalty, and the plunder and division of all the castles and lands of the realm? Monseigneur," said Vitry, "I myself will arrest these wretches!" Mayenne arrived at Vincennes on the 28th day of November. A concourse of citizens there met the duke; and thus escorted he entered Paris. At the porte St. Antoine, the members of the Seize, headed by Boucher, and supported by a great body of adherents had the audacity to present themselves. Boucher with an air of insolent assurance advanced, and after making obeisance commenced an harangue, by the words, "that he was deputed by sundry loyal burghers, to speak to his highness concerning a little affair that happened on the 15th day of the month." The duke passed majestically, saying, "Monsieur, we will hear you at another opportunity. Adieu!"[1] At the

[1] Villeroy, Mém. t. i. p. 294. Cayet—Davila—Montreuil—Discours sur la mort de M. le président Brisson.

Louvre the council had assembled to welcome its chief. A debate ensued, before the duke took refreshment or greeted the princesses. Several of the council, exasperated by the anarchy of the capital, told Mayenne that there were three classes of persons whose destruction was a necessity to insure the peace of the realm—namely: the preachers of Paris; the chieftains of the Seize; and the soldiers of the Spanish garrison, whose disaffection and pillage were the source of countless excesses. The following day, Mayenne sent to demand from Bussy-le-Clerc the keys of the Bastille. The consternation was excessive: strong detachments from the army of Laon entered and had occupied the city at dawn, although the demeanour of the duke continued placable. Bussy returned an insolent refusal to surrender the fortress. Vitry, by command of the duke, then prepared to bombard the Bastille. Cannon was transported from the arsenal to the Place Royale; when Bussy made timely submission, and retired to his own house. During the subsequent three days, secret investigation was made respecting the murder of Brisson and his colleagues in the presence of M. de Mayenne. The duke, meantime, affected great deference for the Seize; and some chroniclers assert actually invited Bussy, Cromé, Boucher, Crucé, and others, to a banquet

at the hôtel de Soissons, then his private abode. On the evening of the 3rd of December, however, the duke signed warrants for the apprehension of Cromé, Cochery, Crucé, Lannoy, Louchard, Bussy-le-Clerc, Amroux, Emenot, and Ameline, who were condemned to be summarily put to death by hanging, in the lower hall of the Louvre. The execution of the sentence was intrusted to M. de Vitry. The Spanish ambassador, meanwhile, had warned the sections not to put faith in the apparent *bienveillance* of the duke; who, in fact, was violently incensed and prepared to inflict unsparing vengeance for the murder of the first president. When Vitry, therefore, went to arrest the delinquents, he found that five out of the nine condemned persons had made their escape, or were securely secreted. Ameline, Emenot, Louchard and Amroux were, however, seized and carried bound to the Louvre, and without respite suffered the punishment of their crimes. Search was made for Bussy in vain: his house was entered, and property to the amount of 600,000 francs confiscated. Crucé fled to the barrack of the Spanish regiments, where he remained some days concealed. Madame de Montpensier then obtained his pardon. She moreover interceded, according to her promise, for the rest of the discomfited members of the

sections, who now humbly implored her protection.[1] At the solicitation of the duchess, an act of amnesty was issued by Mayenne on the 10th of December, from the benefit of which Cochery, Cromé, and Bussy-le-Clerc were specially excepted;[2] and if arrested within the realm, they were doomed to be broken on the wheel without form or process. The duke then proceeds to forbid "all private assemblage of persons, of whatever quality or condition, upon any pretext or occasion; especially of those who having illegally banded together, term themselves 'Le Conseil des Seize,' under penalty of the forfeiture of their lives and the confiscation of their substance." The decree concludes by an injunction, under peril of life, to all persons to denounce such assemblages; and to give notice, should it come to their knowledge, that such were meditated. The edict was registered without one dissentient voice by the parliament of Paris. From thenceforth the arbitrary power of the turbulent demagogues of the Hôtel de Ville expired. Their

[1] Mezerai. De Thou.

[2] The names of the condemned of the ex-council of Forty, were Bussy, Nonnant, Cromé, Mongeot, Parsot, Pelletier, Hamilton, Cochery, Basin, Choulier, Soly, Mault, Le Roy, Dubret, Du Bois, Oudineau, Godon, Poteau, Luppé, Loyau, Thomassin, Regis, Bourtin--all eventually amnestied at the request of madame de Montpensier, though without permission to return into France.

faction, tyranny, and secret intrigues with Spain, tending to the servitude aud oppression of their fellow citizens, rendered their iron rule hateful. The overthrow of the Seize was the first stroke towards the dissolution of the Spanish League. Their fierce partisanship supported the ambitious aspirings of king Philip; while the *liaison* which the Seize maintained with the clubs of provincial democrats throughout the realm, powerfully served the Spanish cause. From the period that the assemblies of the Hôtel de Ville were suppressed, the members of the sections, deprived of the privilege of public declamation, fell into disrepute and even into contempt. The party of Les Politiques, to whom no penal statutes applied, then publicly advocated their own policy. Silenced and intimidated by the fierce threats of the democratic party, the royalists hitherto had refrained from every kind of public demonstration. The great lords—the open or concealed adherents of the Seize—withdrew their patronage on the degradation of the city orators. The duke de Guise even refused to communicate longer with a party deprived of the power of moving public sympathy; and whose leaders were either exiled from the capital or subject to rigid *surveillance*. The licence of the *curés* of the capital, moreover, was checked. The duke de Mayenne caused it to be intimated to all the

priests, that political harangues in their churches would for the future be visited with deprivation of benefices and exile; and he bade the turbulent churchmen remember that the virtues of patriotism, moderation, and devotion to religious duties, were topics upon which they might worthily expatiate from the pulpit. This intimation followed the delivery of a violent discourse upon the executions commanded by M. de Mayenne, from Boucher curé of St. Benôit; in which he all but anathematized the slayers of those "single-hearted and devoted men, the martyrs of the Louvre." The unusual firmness and decision shown at this crisis by Mayenne rendered him for a period omnipotent. His triumph, however, was short-lived and illusory. The downfall of the Seize, or of the democratic party, which had been organized and trained by the late duke de Guise, was the overthrow of the faction, whose machinations and alleged hostility had so often sheltered Mayenne's ambitious schemes in his negotiations with the king of Spain, and with Henry IV. He now stood exposed to the full blaze of the indignation of these potentates; on him rested the sole responsibility of replying to their solicitations. Having overthrown all check to his authority, the duke apparently governed. To Mayenne alone Philip now looked for the decision

and intrigue which should crown the infanta; to the duke alone Henry IV. addressed his remonstrances, and intimated that hostile contumacy, if persisted in, must render his treason beyond future palliation. Mayenne felt the difficulties of his position: too soon the bitterness of his success was developed. "You have heard," wrote the king to the duke de Montmorency, "how those rebels who call themselves 'Le Conseil des Seize' put to death the first president de Brisson and two counsellors. The duke de Mayenne, since his arrival in Paris, has hanged ten of these said incendiaries, and taken the Bastille from another. Moreover, he has caused the Spanish garrison to evacuate Paris. It does not appear to me that such doings can be well pleasing to the king of Spain; and it is my opinion that there will soon be a breach between the confederates. How I long for such an event, you may imagine. The said duke de Mayenne has now quitted Paris to give the *rendezvous* to the duke of Parma. If they come straight down upon me, we will try to give renown to the meeting; which God, by his grace, will order for the welfare and repose of this realm."[1] Henry was then before Rouen; and Mayenne, when called by the uproar in

[1] A mon cousin le duc de Montmorency.—Bibl. Imp. Suppl. Fr. MS. 1009.

Paris, was on his way to confer with the duke of Parma at Soissons, on the preliminaries connected with the recognition of the Infanta doña Isabel as queen of France.

From thenceforth the career of Mayenne exhibits the melancholy spectacle of indecision and paltry craft. When apparently negotiating earnestly with one of the belligerent powers, his agents prowled into the camp of the other; sounding the statesmen of both parties, and eagerly sifting the conditions proposed. Thus, on quitting Paris to confer at Soissons with the duke of Parma and the Spanish ambassador Evora, Mayenne sent to Villeroy, and authorized him to carry a conciliatory message to the king. "The duke de Mayenne," says Villeroy, "found himself so hotly pressed by the Spaniards to decree the election of the infanta; and besides, felt himself so personally incommoded by indisposition, that he sent me commands through my son, and afterwards by letter, written by M. Jeannin, to say to the king "that he, with the princes and lords of the confederate army, was willing to recognize and treat with his majesty, provided that the said king would abjure his errors, and cordially promise to maintain the Faith. But that he (M. de Mayenne) could not of himself take the initiative, nor make overtures; for in that case the Spaniards would

seize several important towns of the realm as a guarantee."

Before taking his departure from the capital, the duke de Mayenne nominated four presidents of the High Court, amongst whom was Etienne Neuilly, president of the Cour des Aides, renowned for his hostility to the late king Henry III.; and for the facile manner in which his tears flowed at command upon the most trivial occasion—a maudlin sensibility which friend and foe delighted to provoke. The duke also gave licence to the High Court to execute a decree unanimously voted, for the decapitation of Roseau the headsman, who had hanged their late first president, M. de Brisson.

Other political complications occurred at this season owing to the unsettled condition of affairs in Rome. The death of Gregory XIV. happened on the 15th of October, 1591. The papal policy having been but the reflex of that adopted by the Spanish cabinet, no sinister rumours were current respecting the demise of his holiness. The king of France, by the death of the pontiff, lost an inveterate enemy;[1] while the League was further hampered by the refusal of the duke de Monte-Marciano to move from the environs of

[1] "Le pape Grégoire," says de Thou, "était crédule, simple, et facile; il avait toujours la bouche ouverte et rioit sans cesse. Cette mauvaise habitude le rendoit ridicule."

Verdun until he had received instructions from the new pontiff. The conclave immediately met; when, after some clamour, the cardinal Giovanni Fachinetti was elected on the evening of Tuesday, the 29th of October. The new pope took the name of Innocent IX.; but as his holiness survived his elevation to the tiara only two months, being all but bed-ridden at the period of his election, his virtues and capacity as supreme ruler of Christendom were not demonstrated. His previous life had been one of learned seclusion. The chief public acts of Innocent were to promise the continuance of the monthly subsidy of 50,000 gold crowns for the prosecution of the war in France, granted by his bigoted predecessor. He also sent a cardinal's hat to Séga bishop of Placentia; and a confirmation of that prelate's mission as papal legate in ordinary, resident in France.

The meeting of the third conclave within little more than the space of a year, was distinguished by scandalous broils and contests. Each potentate being resolved to effect the elevation of his candidate, bribery and intimidation prevailed to a degree before unknown. The cardinals in conclave indulged in the grossest personal abuse, instead of imploring Divine guidance. The claims of cardinal Santorio were supported by the king of Spain, the Venetian republic, and by the grand

duke of Tuscany. The majority of the Sacred College, however, was adverse to the elevation of Santorio.[1] After a factious session, the votes were declared to be in favour of Hippolyto Aldobrandini, who assumed the name of Clement VIII.[2]

[1] "Le cardinal Inigo Davalos dit à haute voix, tout en colère, que Santorio étoit un diable; et que ce cardinal lui avoit promis 8000 écus, et le chapeau pour Thomas son neveu, s'il vouloit lui donner son suffrage." De Thou. Gualdi—Nepotismo di Roma.

[2] January 11th, 1592. The Pope was of a noble Florentine house. His father was Sylvestro Aldobrandini, a proctor, and his mother was Donna Leza Deti.

END OF VOL. I.

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